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Isaac Naff

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
REV. ISAAC NAFF
DUBLIN, VA.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I was the youngest of eleven children George, Katherine, Elizabeth, Jacob, John, Hannah, Abraham, Mary, Rebecca, Susannah & Isaac.

My father's name was Jacob & my mother's, Elizabeth. They were both born and raised on the Susquehannah, in Franklin Co. Pa. My father was the third son of Jacob and Eva Naeff, who were the parents of a large family, six sons and at least four daughters-Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Joseph, Jonathan and David- Mary, Sarah, Katherine and Susannah. My grandfather, Jacob Naeff and an older brother, Sebastian by name, were emigrants from Germany near the borders of Switzerland. Sebastian arrived first at Philadelphia and then awaited the arrival of his younger brother, who on his arrival was sold to serve seven years to pay for his passage across the Atlantic. His older brother generously joined with him to work out the allotted time and thereby reduced it three and a half years. What their occupation was is not known, but as they subsequently owned large bodies of land, it is supposable that they were engaged in farming.

My grandfather subsequently married Miss Eva Flora or Florh, whose parents also emigrated from Germany, but she herself was born on their passage across the Atlantic.

After a number of years, the two brothers removed, with their families, from Franklin CO. Pa. to Franklin Co. Va. Sebastian had but two children, both sons and settled at the junction of the North and South Forks of the Blackwater, which to this day is one of the most beautiful, the most fertile and most productive portions of that large county.

Jacob, with his family except two of his children-Abraham and Sarah who remained behind either in Philadelphia or Baltimore, very much as it was then thought as the sons-in-law of Lot remained in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah-settled on the head waters of Magadee, likewise at the confluence of the North and South branches. Here the ground was equally fertile and productive, but with the smaller areas, much more rugged, being almost wholly surrounded by lofty spurs running down from the Blue Ridge and forming a hollow square or cove-like basin. The water that gurgles from the mountain sides is pure and cold as if issuing from a modern refrigerator, and the scenery superbly grand, enchanting. To this beautiful sequestered vale, my father brought his young and beautiful bride some time during the month of January 1793, having married her when she was 18 on the 30th day of December 1792. She was the daughter of Dr. George Stover and her mother's maiden name was Price. Dr. Stover, after a second marriage, removed from Franklin Co. Pa. to Botetourt Co. Va. and settled at what is now known as the "Botetourt Springs" in Roanoke Co. Va. He was said to have been the father of twenty children, ten by a first marriage and ten by a second. He died in a good old age and many of his descendants are still to be found in the Counties of Botetourt and Roanoke. My grandfather and grandmother both lived to a very old age and died on the ground which they had selected as their home. I have a distinct recollection of the death of my grandmother although so far removed in my nativity from her early days. It was the first impression of death that was ever made on my mind, and the memory of it is vivid even to the present day.

My eldest brother, George, was born October 7, 1793, and during the month of January 1794 following, tradition says, my father, with his wife and young child, made a visit to her father's in Pa. on horseback. Of course, at that day, there could have been no other means of making such a journey, and from our luxurious standpoint, it looks as if such must then have been made at the hazard of life and limb.

Other children were born to them in regular succession until, as above said, the number of them had reached ten-four sons and six daughters. On the 6th day of October, 1817, twenty-four years after the birth of the firstborn, my mother gave birth to her youngest, who is the subject of these notes.

My father died about the year 1829 at the age of 62 from an injury received to his jawbone when a young man. My mother survived him about 27 years and died in 1856 at the age of 82. Their children all lived to maturity and all raised families with one exception. Hannah, although married, remained childless.

My parents were plain, frugal, industrious, god-fearing and god-honoring people. They knew nothing of the conventionalities of modern society, but surrounded themselves with all the necessities for a peaceful, quiet and happy home, which industry, sound judgment and the advantages of the age in which they lived could afford.

In the family circle they invariably used the German language, except when strangers were present who were unacquainted with the language. Then they used the English. My father understood the

English and was able to read the English Bible and Hymnbook though he spoke it very brokenly, while my mother spoke both languages with almost equal fluency. I remember an incident which occurred in my father's English reading when I was quite small which made an indelible impression on my mind. He was reading an old hymn descriptive of our Saviour's childhood, the only couplet of which I have any recollection ran as follows:

"Then he became a bigger child, and sat on Mary's knee."
He read it, "Then he became a nigger child etc." He turned to my mother and said in German, "Here is something that seems very strange. I don't see why it should be so. It reads, Then he became a nigger child, And sat on Mary's knee." My mother was able to explain the difficulty and he laughed heartily at the mistake.

My recollection of him is that he was exceedingly grave and sedate in all his intercourse especially with his own household. Though perfectly kind and even indulgent, yet I never knew him to indulge in anything like levity or hilarity. My feelings towards him were those of the most profound reverence and even awe, though I have no recollection of his ever having used a harsh or unkind word in addressing me. Yet in his presence I always maintained the most careful silence, and would not for any consideration have made any noise that might have disturbed him.

With my mother, I felt much more free. While she was perhaps equally grave and sedate, yet I felt a marked difference in her presence. Not that I loved her less or that I thought her less

or that I thought her less worthy of reverence, but simply because I had the feeling that there was in her heart more of the gently suavity of motherly indulgence.

In their religious connection they belonged to that somewhat obscure and perhaps much misunderstood denomination called Dunkards, Dunkers or Tankers. At the time of which I write, there was doubtless more of moral excellence and Christian rectitude in that denomination, than amongst any of the other sects by which they were surrounded. Their creed consisted of strict and unwavering rectitude between man and man based on the Golden Rule, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." And how muchsoever they may have been traduced for their want of experimental religion, yet their lives in most respects, were beautifully conformed to the requirements of the gospel of Christ.

I say at the time of which I write. For at that early period, their church embraced none but the best families in that sphere to which they belonged. Their doctrines and discipline were by no means popular because they tolerated nought but the strictest adhirence to purity, morality and temperance.

One of their distinctive peculiarities was their mode of Baptism. It consisted in dipping the subject three times face forward under the water: "In the name of the Father; and of the Son; and of the Holy Ghost." This they maintained as in a

certain measure essential to salvation. Not that there could be no salvation without it; but that if known and understood, if rejected would give positive proof of disobedience to the divine command. The ordinance when properly administered was by no means disorderly or unbecoming. The subject, kneeling down in water of sufficient depth to cover most of his body, was plunged gently and skillfully forward by the administrator until the head and shoulders were completely submerged. Then after an interval for breathing, again and so on without rising, until the trineimmersion had been achieved. In all these things, they were strictly conscientious and their faith absolutely unwavering. The greatest objection that could be reasonably urged against them at that period, was that they were almost wholly unaggressive and opposed to anything like a liberal education. They could feel perfectly secure in their own adherence to the commandments of Christ, but regarded the rest of mankind rather as aliens, for whom it was hardly reasonable to expect anything like pure and undefiled religion. Education they looked upon as fostering pride and opening up the way to innovation and thus to a departure from the simplicity of the faith once delivered to the Saints.

Notwithstanding my parents and all my brothers and sisters belonged to this denomination and all have lived and most of them have died in this faith, yet it gives me pleasure to say that I never knew or even suspected any one of them guilty of a single act that could be construed as in violation of the very

strictest interpretation of morality.

In the training of their children they were careful to teach them habits of industry and abstinence from every indulgence that might tend to dissipation and disorder. The only great drawback in this was that they sought no higher attainments for them than that they might be able to read and write and to compute by numbers. And in the case of their daughters the two latter accomplishments were generally considered as superfluous. But even if they had been ever so much inclined to educate their children the facilities were wanting. Their children in this respect were not much different from the children of their neighbors. A three month's school kept by an incompetent teacher during the winter months was about the best privileges the neighborhood afforded. But with all these disadvantages, I am often amazed, when I look back, at the excellent practical knowledge which was often obtained under auspices apparently so inauspicious. For example, I had a brother twelve years my senior who became a preacher and even a Bishop in their church. Being of a quick mind he obtained something more of the rudiments of an English education than was common to those of his age and station. In a few years he had gained not only the confidence and esteem of the people of like faith, but his influence had spread itself far and wide, not only as a sound reasoner but as an eloquent orator. He had made the Scripture alone the man of his counsel and the source of his wisdom, and it seemed as if

he had the whole of the Old and New Testaments thoroughly at his command. Somewhat similar instances were not of infrequent occurrence amongst them.

It was under a condition of things and at a time like those described, that the subject of these notes was properly brought into notice and from which whatever may follow in this narrative will especially date.

Prior to my father's death when I was between eleven and twelve years, but few things that transpired occur to me now. Some things it is true were vividly impressed on my mind which however are scarcely of sufficient importance to be transmitted even to the few who will be likely to peruse these pages.

One or two things however I will venture to mention as they serve to throw some light on the surroundings of my early childhood.

When between seven and eight years of age, I attended my first school. It was taught about two miles from home by a young man of a somewhat questionable family and certainly of very limited attainments. The School house was over a high and very steep ridge. It was built of round unpeeled logs and consisted of five corners, without joists or floor overhead and underfoot nought but the native soil of mother earth. The fifth corner with sort of rude backwall of rough stone across the angle served as the fireplace. Across the front of this were arranged rough benches made of the outside slabs of logs that had been sawn into boards or lumber, with holes bored near the ends and sticks of

wood driven in which served as legs. On these the boys and girls were arranged with no support for the back and feet dangling between bench and earth. From this uncomfortable posture there was no relief except when called to recite. From sunrise in the morning until about sunset in the evening martyrdom of the innocents was continued without alleviation save for an hour given at twelve for dinner and recreation, which latter for the larger boys consisted mainly in cutting and dragging wood from the steep hillside to serve for fuel till recess the next day.

In such a miserable hovel and under such untoward circumstances was laid the foundation of all the learning I was ever to acquire. The Spelling book then in use was Adam Webster's Spelling Book. The principal aim seemed to have been the inculcation of sound and every lesson contained words of a similar sound and an equal number of syllables except Scripture and proper names which were placed in alphabetical order. This method is now wholly ignored, but I have grave doubts of the wisdom of the total abandonment. The copy placed in my hands was one of the most indifferent makeup even of that day. The cover was of the most fragile boards cut across the grain; the paper coarse, dark and tender; the type small, dim and difficult to connect. But it was the only Speller I ever had and when twenty-five years of age, I still had it in a commendable degree of preservation. The alphabet page was worn through in learning the letters but with that exception there was not a rent save the splitting up of the boards which constituted

the cover. My first lessons in two syllables made a lasting impression on my mind. It so happened that the teacher spent the night at my father's about that time. I heard him remark to the family that my success in spelling two syllables was very gratifying. Whatever he may have thought of it, I certainly felt that it was a wonderful achievement. From that time forth there was enkindled in my breast a thirst for education which knew no abatement.

Memory does not serve me as to exact time or method of learning to read. Books there were none at command, but the spelling book itself contained a few lessons in reading. Such as some extracts from the "Economy of Human Life", two or three of AEsop's Fables translated into English and a Poem or two from some old English author in very fine closely printed type. The first attempt now remembered of an attempt to read was a poem beginning thus: "The rose had been washed, lately washed in a shower". All but this is now dimmed or faded from memory's tablet, but the impression made by it on my young mind is as vivid as ever. The prominent feeling was that whoever had produced such a piece must have had a mind thoroughly trained in every department of learning. Indeed for years to come all that I learned to read impressed me with the idea that the authors must have been men of almost supernatural wisdom, and my great wonder was how they could ever have obtained such an amount of learning. The conclusion arrived at was something like this: that they must

have been naturally endowed with faculties almost infinitely above those that belonged to the masses of men and that it would be vain and futile for an ordinary person to attempt to attain a similar degree of eminence. A feeling something akin to this, that men of learning were born and not made, pervaded my breast, and instead of taking courage from the examples of others, had I known the struggles through which they had passed, I opined at the hopelessness of my own lot. A burning, consuming desire for learning controlled my every thought, while a feeling that attending circumstances absolutely prohibited me from attaining even a moderate degree of learning. I thus became moody, dejected, dissatisfied. In after years, I used to follow the plow, or work at other farm work, with my mind filled with a feeling of discontent, and from morning till night brooding over my unhappy lot. This also in after years excited an unhappy influence over me from the fact that I had accustomed myself to place a false estimate on the wisdom, greatness and goodness of learned men. For when subsequently brought in close proximity with men of renown; I was overwhelmed with disappointment on finding them, notwithstanding their learning and distinction, still subject to many of the foibles, follies and imperfections of men in the ordinary walks of life. Hence the reaction too often led me to distrust even the wisdom of the wisest of men.

But I have perhaps dwelt too long upon this feature in my

experience. There is still another feature that may merit more particular consideration for the moral effect it should have. As before said, my actual life did not really begin until after the death of my father. Then it was that the most critical period of my life began to dawn upon me. Then it was that character which had been partially formed before began to be matured or at least, somewhat developed. And then it was that feelings and thoughts intruded themselves into my mind which have exerted a baleful influence upon the whole of my subsequent life.

I was left alone with my mother, a brother twelve years older than myself, a sister still older than he, and my youngest sister three and a half years my senior. My mother was so overwhelmed at the loss of her husband that she seemed to give up all interest in temporal things, and for years subsequently, she was not known to smile. My elder sister was exceedingly exacting in all the domestic affairs of the household. My younger sister had reached the period of young womanhood and was soon married and left us for her own home and my brother was constantly engaged in the superintendence of the farm, so that I was left without any suitable companion either as to age or station. The consequence was that I was left much or almost wholly alone to brood over such crude thoughts and feelings as might be called up in my uncurbed and untutored imagination. And just here I would venture the remark, that whatever may be held by other or whatever may be taught in books to the contrary,

I am fully persuaded by my own experience that it is not good for boys to be left alone. Suitable companionship is as necessary for the health of the mind and heart as suitable food is for the health of the body.

In my thirteenth year my mind began to assert its powers of thought and penetration. My mind wandered in all the broad expanse of thought without guide, without control, without restriction. The consequence was that evil thoughts and feelings intruded themselves and were cherished. Evil practices were found and indulged in. And evil associations sought after and too readily found. The needful companionship was supplied by association with servants, hirelings and boys of the community whose training had been of a different and a lower order. What they knew and talked of most was not food for an inquiring mind, but fuel for improper feelings and passions already enkindled in a too susceptible mind. Thus instead of the mind being trained to useful thought and meditation at this most important period of life, the imagination was given loose rein to rove through all the vast labyrinth of unhily thought, desire and passion. Thus thoughts, feelings and habits indulged in and formed during the period of minority, have in a great measure exerted their influence upon my whole life, and that period which ought to afford the most agreeable reminiscences, I would often fain have blotted out from my memory forever. How true is the holy writ when it says, "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh

reap corruption".

But notwithstanding all this my thirst for an education found no abatement. It was the will of my father that I should remain with my mother and brother on the farm until my maturity, when the homestead should be equally divided between my two older brothers and myself. To this I submitted without any open murmuring, but often with inner and the most bitter discontent. During this period I occasionally attended such schools as the neighborhood afforded for a month or two in the winter season and once even I was put to board away from home at my brother's and attended school for some two months in succession. But such schooling afforded me but little progress. What books however fell into my hands I read and reread and devoured with the greatest avidity. These consisted of The Introduction to the English Reader, Murray's English Reader, a torn copy of the Columbian Orator and a copy of AEsop's Fables translated into English. I subsequently bought a copy of the narrative of some sea Captain whose ship had been stranded on the coast of Africa, and himself and companions captured and reduced to slavery by the Arabs. And last of all I borrowed a comic life of Davy Crockett which I read with the most wonderful zest. These works I thought must have been the most wonderful that had ever been produced by man. Pope's Essay on man and his Universal Prayer, I looked upon as absolutely inimitable. These with the study

of Pike's Arithmetic as far as the Compound Numbers constituted my stock of learning when my twenty-first year was attained.

And here one thing ought to be mentioned that exerted no small influence on my habits of thought and feelings. The Dunkards held that the fourth commandment was not morally binding under the Christian dispensation. They regarded it as expedient to observe every seventh day as a day of rest from their accustomed toils, but otherwise it might be observed in whatever way best suited the taste or fancy of the individual. It was customary for all to array themselves in their Sunday apparel and there was preaching in reach to attend the services. But in those days the Dunkers had no houses of worship holding their meetings in barns and private houses by rotation as occasion might serve. And as their congregation extended over a large area of country two or three months generally elapsed between Services in the same community. Thus while it was not an uncommon for persons to ride on horseback ten, twelve, fifteen and even twenty miles to attend preaching and return the same day; yet it was not possible for all to avail themselves of these privileges. As yet Sabbath Schools were unknown and other denominations did not think proper to intrude themselves into a neighborhood almost wholly under Dunker influence. The consequence was that the young people were left to spend the Sabbath as best comported with their own inclinations. Hence some engaged in fishing, some in hunting and some in other sports. But most

generally the young people male and female found it convenient to assemble together at some private house where they spent the day and not infrequently a part of the night in hilarity, trivial conversation, games or whatever amusements happened to present themselves. Dancing and music, except vocal, were strictly prohibited.

While these amusements were engaged in by all as a matter of course and no one even thought of their impropriety because they had no conscience as to the proper observance of the Sabbath, it is not difficult to see what a dissipating effect it must have had on the minds of the young and especially on the more susceptible amongst them. And then it had this additional effect. It destroyed all possible opportunity of storing the mind with useful and religious knowledge, which is one of the special objects of the Sabbath.

It was my misfortune to pass through all these scenes. And although my conscience was often far from being at ease, I saw no relief other than that which might ultimately be obtained by uniting with the Church of my father's and becoming thoughtful, staid and upright in my deportment as I had witnessed in the case of so many others. Still my heart yearned for something more tangible. This I thought could be found only in education which was my ideal of all human perfection. With a mind thus prepared and habits of thought thus unsettled, I determined within myself to pursue the high road of learning. Hence contrary to the

wishes of my kindred who were opposed to education, without books, without the most remote idea of where to begin my course of study and without any counsellor to direct, I determined to commence with a short method of the study of English Grammar that had fallen into my hands, prepared by Greenlief. For this purpose I commenced going to school about ten miles from home to a good Methodist Local preacher by the name of Beuch (or Burch), a man of small attainments but of generous heart. It was soon discoverable my advancement in this branch of learning was of small moment. So I turned aside to study Arithmetic with a man who had considerable reputation as an Arithmetician. With him, in one month's time, I "ciphered" through the whole of Pike's Arithmetic. This was an unusual attainment for anyone at that early day and I felt encouraged and indeed this proved to be of no little advantage in after days.

The same year there was a school opened in the vicinity of the first I had attended, by a Scotchman named Thomas Young. He was past the meridian of life, evidently an educated man and one of the best teachers I have ever known, but a man of great peculiarities and some glaring faults. He was exceedingly reticent about his previous history and former life. No one knew when or why he left his native country. Hence it was strongly surmised by many that he was a fugitive from justice or at least from some alledged crime or misdemeanor. But although professing no religious Creed, he was strictly moral with one single exception. He could not abstain wholly from the intemperate

use of intoxicating liquors. At intervals sometimes of a year and sometimes of longer duration he would indulge to excess and being a man of quick and violent temperament when excited, this generally resulted in breaking up his School and his removal to some other neighborhood.

With him the study of the Latin Language was commenced. This to me was an entirely new field of labor and of thought. I had no previous idea whatever of the structure of language, save as I had been accustomed to use it in German and English. But I applied myself assiduously to the task before me, knowing nothing of what was involved in such an enterprise. But I had the consolation of knowing that my teacher at least thought my progress was highly commendable. For fifteen months my application to my studies at that place was continued with unabated zeal. But my association outside of the schoolroom were not of the happiest. I was thrown night and morning into the company of some young men who were far from being moral either in their habits or in their conversation. And being easily influenced and having no especial religious principles to restrain me, I unfortunately gave way to various forms of dissipation which gave me much trouble in after life.

But under the guidance of an all wise Providence, an incident occurred at this time which gave the key that unlocked the course to the whole of my future life. My preceptor fell into one of his troubles, having broken with his patrons at once abandoned

his school. But being a popular teacher, he opened a school, with but little delay, in Bedford County about four miles South of what was then known as the Pisqu (or Pisgah) Presbyterian Church. It was thought best under all the circumstances that I should accompany him and continue my studies under his instruction. This introduced me into new association, into a field of new thought and amongst a people that I had not known.

Hitherto I had known nothing of any religious tenets save those taught by my own people and having heard an occasional sermon from a Primitive Baptist Preacher. Methodists and Presbyterians were entirely unknown to me save as distorted accounts of their faith and practices had been detailed to me by prejudiced parties. Besides as has been intimated, my late associations had been anything but favorable to any kind of religious impressions. I therefore entered my new field with all the prejudices imbibed from my early training against other denominations. The sincerity of my own people was beyond all doubt. Their rectitudes and morality was beyond all controversy. Their doctrines as I then viewed them comported strictly with the revelation which God had given in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The consequence was that I regarded other professors of religion with a kind of pity for their ignorances of the true way of Salvation. Their religion might restrain from any of the irregularities of the world, but being a mere delusion

from the want of a better knowledge could avail them nothing in the way of a future life.

With feelings like these, I was introduced into an intelligent and strictly Presbyterian family as my boarding place. My studies were continued and the new customs and scenes by which I was surrounded strictly observed. The lady of the house was a sister of Rev. Samuel Graham D.D. for many years Professor in Union Seminary, and according to the straitest sect of her religion, she lived a Presbyterian. Devotedly pious herself, she sought most earnestly to infuse the same spirit into all about her. Her children, which were numerous, were catechised and instructed in all the forms and appliances of the Creeds. They were exhorted earnestly and faithfully to choose that good part that should never be taken from them. I have known her to spend whole nights in secret and earnest prayer for the conversion of her children, but without any seeming effect. This I attributed in a great measure to bigotry. And in after years even when I had obtained larger views, I was often constrained to fear that her great anxiety proceeded from a kind of morbid desire for the salvation of her children, because they were hers. For if any one of them ever made an intelligent profession of religion, not one of them ever became distinguished as workers in the Church.

The pater dome was a man of different temperament. Less intelligent, less exacting, less indoctrinated, he was nevertheless

a ruling elder in the Church and a man of good report from those that were without. He was a man of business and not infrequently from home, but when at home, whether from choice or to gratify the stricter feelings of his wife, he always held family worship night and morning. This duty in his absence was always performed by the mater families.

This was soon after the unfortunate division of the Presbyterian Church in 1837 and 38. The excitement, as I afterward learned, had run high in that community and resulted in the formation of two Presbyterian Churches, the one Old and the other New School, both worshipping in the Pisqu Church.

It so happened that my host had espoused the cause of the New School party and my hostess that of the Old. This of course produced some disturbance in the family, but never, to my knowledge at least, any serious misunderstanding between husband and the wife.

The pastor of the Old School branch of the Church, was the Rev. James Hitchell, long a resident minister in that community, now venerable with age and feeble in strength, yet strong in his faith once delivered to the Saints and uncompromising in his adherence to what he regarded as the fundamental principles of his Church.

The Rev. Jacob Dache Mitchell D.D. then in the prime of manhood and in the full possession of his remarkably fascinating influences over his audiences, was pastor of the New School branch

of the Church. He resided in Liberty, where he was likewise pastor, and preached alternately with Parson Mitchell, as he was familiarly called, every other Sabbath.

It was the habit of the family in which I resided to attend the Services of these ministers indiscriminately. And having no other means of spending the Sabbath I readily conformed to the same habit. I am sorry to say that I was actuated less by feelings of devotion than by a desire to be entertained by something new and possibly somewhat startling. Memory does not recall any serious impressions made on my mind during this interval. True from the isolation of my younger days, I was always somewhat seriously inclined, and was often possessed with dark forebodings of future retribution, yet the Services on which I attended made no special impression on my mind.

I pursued my studies and formed strong attachments for the household in which I lived. I can say also, without any desire for self adulation, that I soon ingratiated myself strongly into the favor especially of my hostess. She very soon began to treat me as one of her own family and during the many years of her subsequent life her marked kindness towards me showed no abatement. Her uniform, consistent and devoted piety impressed itself strongly upon my mind. Her precious life of faith and unwavering devotedness was the first means under God of opening my eyes to the fact that true piety might exist elsewhere besides

in the Church of my childhood.

But my teacher's career in this new field was unfortunately again shortened. In a few months he fell into his former besetment and the school was broken up. This to me was a sore trial. The point had now been reached where progress had not only become more easy but where I was beginning somewhat to appreciate the benefits I had derived. To quit school was to abandon further progress in my studies which was utterly repugnant to my feelings.

While in this state of perplexity, to my surprise and somewhat to my embarrassment, the patrons of the school turned to me as the successor to my former preceptor. In some measure I felt my deficiency in those branches principally to be taught. In reading, writing and Arithmetic, I was not wholly deficient. But of English Grammar and Geography, I knew absolutely nothing. Still I had nothing to lose but everything to gain. Teaching would be somewhat in the line of my pursuit. And although my direct progress would be somewhat checked, I would still be brought in contact with books and the knowledge gained would be practical. So I entered resolutely upon my new and untried calling.

The success which attended my efforts is to this day a mystery to me. I was able to see in after days that my preparation was wholly inadequate to the position I held. Notwithstanding the community was one of more than ordinary intelligence for that day, my teaching not only proved satisfactory but was highly

commended by all concerned. At the close of the first term, an exhibition was given which was attended by the patrons and the most learned individuals of the neighborhood. Everyone was pleased and my reputation as a successful teacher established.

A second term was entered upon with renewed energy and with results equally encouraging. It has fallen to my lot to engage much in teaching since that day. But although with much greater preparation and vastly superior facilities, greater success has never crowned my labors however assiduous. I mention this mainly to show how much depends, in almost every pursuit, on the determination to do the best we can under the circumstances in which we are placed. The teaching must have been greatly defective. But the defects were in a great measure lost sight of in the zeal by which it was enforced.

And all this time my feelings in a religious point of view were becoming more and more mollified. Others were still looked upon as in a state of great delusion though great credit was given them for sincerity. So I lived on and worked on without experiencing any material change. My thirst for a deeper insight into the mystery of learning knew no abatement but was rather intensified. At this juncture a new field was laid open to my ambition. A brother of my landlord, who was a physician of some note, conceived the idea that I might with propriety enter upon the study of Medicine. This fired my unsophistic mind with new and unthought of emotions. Such a course would bring me in

contact with men of Science and learning and would by degrees raise me from the sphere in which I had been accustomed to move, and introduce me into ideal state of attainment, which my imagination had so often pictured to my view, but which was felt to be utterly beyond my reach. With the books furnished me by this friend, I commenced reading Medicine. But without a guide and suitable instruction, I felt discouraged. Little progress was therefore made in this new pursuit. Time dragged heavily along and I almost despaired of any satisfactory achievement.

But about this time another incident occurred in the providence of God, which changed the whole tenor of my life and settled me down to that course I have hitherto pursued.

The Methodist brethren were holding what they called a revival meeting in a church which was about seven miles distant from my boarding place. It was reported that there was a good deal of excitement and some young persons, ladies and gentlemen proposed to me that we should attend one night. I consented and we made the journey in a state of glee and hilarity which conported little with attendance on a solemn meeting. We entered the crowded meeting house. The minister, a young man, gave us a spirited talk, and then came down out of the desk and in a very vociferous manner began to call for mourners. This seemed to be the signal for every species of noises and confusion that could well be conceived--indeed far surpassing

anything that I had ever conceived of. Some rushed out into the audience and dragged their friends nolens volens to the altar. Some shrieked; some wailed; shouted; some sang; some exhorted; some prayed; some clapped their hands; some laughed the most unearthly laughs that it was ever my misfortune to hear.

The scene was new and harrowing to me. I had heard such accounts but supposed them to be greatly exaggerated. I looked on unmoved except by a feeling of pity and a species of disgust. As the hour grew late and matters seemed to grow worse rather than better, I proposed to my companions that we should retire. They readily consented and we arose to depart. I felt chagrined. I felt that it was nothing short of solemn mockery, if not blasphemy to think that the Holy Ghost could be author of such a scene of confusion. I turned away hoping never to witness another such a scene and with a feeling of profound pity for these deluded enthusiasts.

But just as I passed through the doorway of the house this thought passed through my mind as if whispered almost inaudible accents, "Whether these people are in the right or not, one thing is sure your own heart is not right". I went forth but the mysterious monitor went with me. It followed me to my house. It clave to me through the night. It assailed me in the morning and I began to feel strangely uncomfortable. This was Saturday morning.

Now it happened in the providence of God, that the Rev.

J. D. Mitchell commenced one of his protracted meetings at Pisgah that very day. In these meetings he had been eminently successful in winning souls to Christ. His friends therefore were high in their expectancy for the results of the meetings; while those of the Old School party, who ignored many of the measures he chose to introduce into his meetings looked on with a feeling of distrust and something of opposition. But the attractions of such a meeting were too great to be wholly disregarded by any except the few who were fully set in their opposition. So the community generally turned out the first day.

With the feeling of repugnance which had come over me the night before added to the prejudice I had imbibed from my early training against all undue excitements in religious matters, but with my mind still oppressed with the conviction I had been unable to throw off, I went with the rest in order to witness what would be the result of this meeting. My recollection is that the Church which was by no means a small one, was well filled with a grave and expectant looking audience. I seated myself somewhat towards the rear of the Church, feeling myself to be a spectator rather than a participant in what was to follow.

At length after some consultation amongst the initiated one, the minister mounted the lofty, old fashioned box pulpit. At that day Dr. Mitchell was one of the finest looking, not

to say one of the handsomest, men I ever saw. To my primitive ideas of dress, he was superbly attired, and his manner of ascending the pulpit seemed to me to indicate but little of what ought to characterize the humble follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. But my feelings prompted me strongly to listen to what he might have to say. Prior to that, I had concerned myself little about what the preacher might say, unless it was to mark those passages which might fall under my criticism or exciting disapproval. Now however my attention seemed to be aroused from different motives. I wanted to hear something that would dispel the feeling that seemed rankling in my heart.

After the preliminary services had been gone through, much to my relief, the text was announced in that solemn, impressive, clear, musical voice for which Dr. Mitchell was so noted in those palmy days of his remarkable pulpit power.

To me the subject was new and somewhat startling especially in that ringing tone in which it was announced. It is found in the IX Chapter of Prophecy of Zachariah and at the 12th verse, "Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope; even today do I declare that I will render double unto you".

As he unfolded this text and made it appear that the impenitent were the prisoners of hope and that they were hopelessly shut up to the righteous condemnation of a sin-hating and sin-avenging God and that would surely render unto them double and that speedily, unless they should repent, my attention

became more and more riveted upon his discourse. And as he described the sinners feelings in view of his condition and in view of his hopes for the future, I was startled and amazed that any mortal man who perhaps did not even know me by name, should apparently know almost all the thoughts and feelings I had ever experienced. Besides it seemed as if he had singled me out from the audience as the single object of his eloquent appeals. It seemed impossible that his delineations could apply to anyone else as they did to me, and his eyes seemed to fix themselves immovably upon me with a peculiar burning, penetrating luster under which my very soul appeared to be transparent. Had it been possible, I would feign have hid myself from that all-penetrating gaze.

The eloquence, clearness and force of that sermon surpassed anything I had ever listened to before, and indeed even to this day, though many years have intervened, it does not seem to me that I have ever heard another sermon so full of awakening and startling truth, so eloquently delivered and so forcibly expressive of the sinners true condition while he lingers in a state of inpenitency. Notwithstanding I am now satisfied that he did not treat the text according to its true exegetical sense. I am also satisfied that I have never heard a more powerful sermon of its kind than that was.

My feelings during this discourse were new and indescribable. While prejudice still held its sway, I was amazed at the eloquence

of the preacher, I was overwhelmed with what seemed to be his knowledge of my actual experience. I felt condemned by the fearful truths he uttered and which I was powerless to confute. In short, I began to feel myself lost without knowing any means of escape. As my mind wandered back to the quiet faith of my ancestry, I felt that all their Baptisms, forms and ceremonies would be unavailing for me. My sins appeared of so gross a character than in all probability my case was beyond the reach of mercy. But in closing the exercises, the preacher exhorted his congregation to retire to their homes and to spend the afternoon and evening in private meditation, reading the Scriptures and prayer. I remember well that my resolution was formed at once to make this a test question. I would comply strictly with the proposition. If satisfactory results should follow, I would believe in what I had heard, otherwise I would know that it was all mere fancy or religious fanaticism. With these feelings I left the Church and proceeded at once to my horse, but just as I was in the act of mounting, I was approached by a gay, sprightly, worldly young man about my own age, a frequent if not almost a constant associate. In a cheerful and persuasive manner, he accosted me about as follows: 'Waff I want you to go with me to Mr.-'s, some four or five miles to dinner. The Misses---will be there and we shall have a most delightful time! I told him, 'No, I am going home'. He remonstrated with me and offered many inducements. But I was

firm and positively declined. Just at that moment we were approached by a brother of his who was a member of the Church and our seignier by several years. He appealed to me in almost the same language and my resolution at once was dashed to the ground. The thought flashed through my mind; "Here is a man much older than myself and a member of the Church. He heard all the preacher said. If there were anything in this matter, he would know it, and would not advise me to a thing in direct opposition to what his own preacher has recommended. I will go". Together we proceeded to the place appointed. I was introduced into a company of gay, attractive fashionable young ladies. After dinner had been served, cards were introduced. We engaged in play. And under the mirth and excitement of the occasion, all my solemn resolved and serious reflections were driven from me like chaff from the summer threshing floor. We continued until a late hour at night and then returned to our respective places of abode. I arrived at my quiet room in safety, but alas, how changed!

I felt no longer the goadings of a guilty conscience. I tried to recall the feelings with which I had left the church, but in vain. I felt myself to be morally dead and was oppressed with an awful sense of my inability to feel. I went to Church the next day with something of a hope that my former feelings might return. But no, I experienced nothing but an oppressive sense of insensibility. I became alarmed. I could account for

my condition in no other way than that I had by yielding to temptation grieved away the Holy Spirit, and the thought that I must henceforth remain in a state of insensibility to the enormous sins, of which I knew myself to be guilty, became almost insupportable.

I attended Church, I tried to listen to the stirring appeals from the Sacred desk, I read my Bible, I tried to pray, I went with others to the anxious seat and witnessed the joys of some who had obtained a lively hope of pardoned sin. My feelings were very much akin to those of the poet Hart when he conceived the Hymn, "O! For a glance of heavenly day, etc.

In this state I continued for several days as the meeting was protracted from day to day. I felt myself condemned and had a clear conception of God's justice in my condemnation. But the manner in which that condemnation could be escaped was hidden from my view.

At length one night, as the preacher was taking his rounds speaking a word to the anxious, he said to me, "My young friend, are you still without any comfortable hope?" I answered him with a sob. He then said, "Is it possible you cannot see how God can be just in the justification of every one that believeth in Jesus?" and passed on.

In a moment, as if it had been by a sudden flash of lightening, the whole matter was so plain that it seemed to illuminate my whole soul. My sins seemed pardoned, God was

reconciled to me a sinner and I rejoiced in Christ my Saviour.

But the change was so sudden, the experience so new and wonderful, the peace so overwhelming, that I feared it was after all some kind of illusion. Hence I gave no intimation to any one of what I felt. I went out of the church. All nature seemed to have undergone a change. The moon shone with an unwonted brightness. The whole landscape presented a beauty unnoticed before. The vaulted heavens displayed a grandeur and magnificence that became almost oppressive. I could almost exclaim with the Psalmist, "The heavens disclose thy glory and the firmament showeth thy handi-work".

My affections were changed. I loved everybody and everything. I wondered that everyone could not see the beauty and efficiency of the redemption purchased by Christ. And in my enthusiasm, I felt that I could show the way so clear to an enquirer that he would be obliged to avail himself of its benefits. Still I mentioned my feelings to no one. I went home and the next morning everyone knew from the expression of my face that I had undergone some great change. I went back to Church that day and there before the assembled community, I avowed my belief that I had experienced a change of heart. This if memory serves my right was on the 17 day of September 1842 and in the 25 year of my age. The meeting continued for sixteen days and nights without intermission. The interest was general and profound. Christians were greatly revived and

many sinners found hope in Christ. Notwithstanding there were some who objected to the measures used, yet there was nothing but the strictest order in the conduct of the meeting from the beginning to the end. I don't think there was anyone attended that meeting who was not thoroughly convinced that the work was genuine and under the influence of the spirit of God.

There was one incident I will mention here with the hope that it may influence some one in after days. There was one young man in the community of good family with intellectual endowments of a very high character but unfortunately he had fallen into habits of intemperance. During the meeting he was apparently brought under deep conviction and the whole community rejoiced in the hope that he would be converted. But at length one day, in the midst of one of the most solemn appeals from the Sacred desk, he rose right up, with the tears streaming from his eyes, and left the Church. From that time forward, all seriousness seemed to leave him and he returned to his irregular habits. For the rest of his life which was a short one, he gave no sign of interest in religious matters. But on his death-bed, he bewailed with the most bitter lamentations his lost condition.

Throughout the whole of this meeting my happiness seemed to be complete. I enjoyed a peace of mind and inward joy was new and indescribable. The burden of guilt seemed rolled off from my shoulders and in this new experience I felt that life was really worth living for. Perfect love seemed to have cast out all fear,

and the future was robbed of its terrors.

But my tranquillity was too great to continue. The meeting closed. Everything settled back into its usual channel. There was nothing left for me to do but to meditate on the wonderful scenes through which I had passed. Where now was the faith of my childhood? Where was the pity I had once felt for the delusion of the very people into whose ways I had almost imperceptibly fallen, and whose creed I had ostensibly espoused? What must I do? What could I do? I had passed the Rubicon and retreat was impossible. I had put my hands to the plow and to look back would render me unfit for the Kingdom of heaven. But what if after all my strong experiences had been nothing more than the excitement of an over-wrought imagination? What if it were true, as my people claimed it to be, that it was nothing more than a delusion of Satan to cheat me of my better inheritance and to drown my unwary soul in perdition? Such reflections troubled me greatly and I felt that there was but one course left me. I must investigate.

My knowledge of the religious system of the people among whom I had been brought up was clear enough. Reformation of life, an honest and upright demeanor, doing good to others on the principle of doing to others as you would have others do to you, keeping the Commandments of the New Testament which involved a three-fold immersion, Salutation with the Holy Kiss, washing the feet of the Saints and eating the love feast in connection with the Lord's Supper. But all this now seemed powerless to meet my case. I had been made sensible, in some measure at least, of the enormity of my guilt and

of my need of some moral cleansing before I could do anything that could be acceptable in the sight of a pure and holy God. My own righteousness seemed even worse than filthy rags. No sacrifice I could make could atone for the enormity of my guilt; no righteousness I had to plead could render me acceptable in the eyes of a sin-avenging God.

From the Bible and other good books, I learned that, "The blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanseth from all sin". That "By the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified". Hence by a gradual process, the great doctrine of "Justification by faith alone" dawned in upon my mind. It seemed fully to meet my wants and I was content to rest my hope fully on the merits of a crucified Saviour. This was the doctrine held and taught by my new friends and spiritual advisors. Thus far then my way seemed clear.

But Just here a new difficulty confronted me. Baptism was clearly enjoined by Christ upon his followers. And here was a radical difference between the mode of my early teaching and that practiced by the people amongst whom I now dwelt. Could they both be right? Differ as they did, this seemed scarcely admissable. I had often heard the arguments of the Dunkers in support of their mode, and if not wholly unanswerable, they seemed at least plausible enough. But here was a people equally sincere in their faith, equally consistent in their lives and equally well satisfied with the Baptism which had been administered to them. Of the arguments they employed in support of their mode, I knew nothing. What right

had I therefore to sit in judgment on their sincerity or to denounce them for their delusion? "Charity suffereth long and is kind; Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up".

With the kindest feelings therefore for both parties, and divesting myself, as far as possible, of all prejudice, I entered upon the investigation of this important subject. By the reading of the Bible, and of such other Books as came within my reach, I soon satisfied myself that Baptism consisted in the application of the subject, and not of the subject to the water. Then as most of the purifications of the Old Testament seemed to have been effected by sprinkling of blood or water upon the external person. And so when I learned that the outpouring of the Holy Ghost was denominated a Baptism, it seemed still more plausible to me that descent of the element upon the subject should constitute the Baptism of Christ and his apostles.

Thus although I was fully apprised of the fact that my course would give occasion for great sorrow to my kindred and the friends of my youth, I could see no better course that I could pursue at least for the present, than to cast in my lot with the people from whom I had received so much light and as I hope, had derived such great benefit. I presented myself to the Session and was received into full membership with the Pisgah Church, New School, under the pastorate of the Rev. J. D. Mitchell.

My people were grieved at my course, and doubtless thought me deluded, but seeing my sincerity, they never reproached nor spoke harshly of the position I had taken. I loved the Church of my choice, I loved my pastor even beyond ordinary admiration; and although now constrained to regard them in error as touching many of the essentials or fundamental principles of the Christian religion, I loved the people upon whom I had turned my back, for I could not divest myself of the purity of their lives and sincerity of the simple faith of the truth of the doctrines which they had espoused.

Becoming more and more oppressed with a sense of my ignorance of the doctrines and usages of the Christian world as light dawned gradually upon my mind. I felt a renewed and increased desire for penetrating still further and to the utmost of my ability into all the mysteries of learning which I regarded as the basis of settling all those difficulties by which I found myself environed. Besides a new principle now presented itself for my consideration. An earnest desire to do the good to others, or rather to do the greatest amount of good forced itself upon my consideration. How to effect this now became the great problem to be solved. In order to accomplish much in this direction, I must needs be fully convinced of the truth of the cause which I might espouse. The most thorough investigation was the only thing that could fit me thoroughly for such a work.

Whether it was suggested by others or whether it came spontaneously into my mind, I do not now remember. But the thought once conceived made a lasting impression on my mind. A thorough preparation for preaching the gospel, such as is required by the Presbyterian Church, would enable me to know the truth, and when known enable me to defend it. If established to those who were laboring under the delusion from which I had emerged. If not, I would be the better enabled to return to and defend the faith of my ancestry.

And in support of the possibility of my becoming a minister, tradition said that my grandfather as a minister of no ordinary ability at his day; my uncle, for whom I was named, I knew to have been a minister and a man of most lovely Christian Character; my brother was then a living minister and a man of remarkable gifts as an exponent of the Scriptures according to the faith of his fathers. Having these convictions and being encouraged by my friends, I determined to study for the ministry.

I here leave out of view any special divine call to the Sacred work of the Ministry of the Gospel. My mind was led to this decision in a gradual kind of way and having once settled it as my duty, there was nothing left me but to go forward. It is possible however that had all the difficulties of such an enterprise been known to me in the beginning, I might have been deterred from the undertaking. But as doubtless in many other

cases, these were wisely hid from my view. Indeed I had not the remotest conception what was involved in such a preparation. With me everything was to be learned with nothing to begin with. But God was not unmindful of me in my ignorance. In his gracious providence, he raised up friends for me from the beginning. And from that time onward to the end of my course of preparation, I was never in want of friends ready to afford me any assistance I might need.

It so happened, or rather it was so in the divine providence, that the Rev. J. D. Mitchell was then engaged in teaching a Classical School in Liberty, Virginia. Without my knowledge and without any effort on my part, arrangements were made for my attendance on his School. Thomas L. Leftwich, a man of wealth, and distinguished for his piety and labors of love; an elder in the Church and of remarkable power in prayer; and his accomplished and excellent wife Mildred O. who was the daughter of the distinguished "Parson Turner" of Bedford County, kindly offered me a home in their family, which I most gratefully accepted. They were the parents of the Rev. James Turner Leftwich D.D. then a boy of eight years, now pastor of one of the principal churches in the City of Baltimore. They had also one daughter, Sarah Fannie, then two years old, now the wife of Alexander McPheeters of Raleigh, N. C. Mrs. Leftwich is still living at a very advanced age.

And now a new era dawns upon me. From the simple and primitive mode of country life of youthful days, I had been advanced to a community of greater intelligence and more refinement but still in the country. Consequently I had seen but little of the conventionalities of modern society. Now my lot was to be cast in a town of some pretensions to refinement. Hitherto my ideas of town life had been of the most extravagant character. Having looked upon everything in the country as crude and unsophisticated, I naturally regarded everything in town as refined and elegant. And being naturally of retiring and shrinking temperament, and feeling most vividly my inability to make even a respectable appearance amongst intelligent and refined people. I entered into my new field with the greatest fear and even trepidation. But I was received so kindly and treated with so much lenity and consideration, that my embarrassment was soon in a great measure dispelled. And here I desire to say that to Mrs. Leftwich more than to anyone else, I am indebted for any achievements I may have made in overcoming the crudeness of my manners and in obtaining a degree of urbanity which enabled me in after life to deport myself creditably in the best of society. Much of course was gained from careful observation but more from the admonitions and even reproofs of my esteemed friend. Whatever she did she did promptly and with energy. Hence I learned to trust her

with the utmost confidence, and to this day, I count her amongst the best friends I have ever had.

I entered upon my studies in school with gladness and with a determination to make the most possible of the advantages which I believed I now possessed. It is true a number of more boys in school appeared to be a good deal further advanced than myself. This was of course embarrassing and somewhat humiliating. But I know I had made good progress in former days and I believed I should be able to do it again. I commenced the study of Algebra and found it a most fascinating study indeed. Also Robinsons history of Europe and Alexander's Evidences of Christianity afforded me pleasure and profit. But in Latin, where I thought I had already made some progress, my efforts were foiled. Anthon's works on the Latin language had just been issued, and Dr. Mitchell always inclined to adopt any theory that was new and seemed plausible, was much interested in Anthon's method of teaching Latin. But this changed the whole method in which I had been taught and threw me back to the first principles of a new theory which confused everything I had learned and greatly retarded my progress. In Algebra, I found but little difficulty until I came to Equations of the Second Degree. There I was held spellbound and my teacher failed to relieve me. So the study of Algebra ceased and there was no progress in Latin; history and the evidences were pursued with much vigor. Hence

the time passed off. I was greatly dishearted. Indeed it was a year almost lost to me so far as education was concerned. This was 1842 and 1843.

Dr. Mitchell at that day, I regard as one of the most beautiful and effective preachers I ever heard. But I am sorry to say that he failed most ignominiously as a teacher. Hence the time I spent with him amounted to very little in the way of advancement in my studies. I was greatly discouraged and became quite despondent. And yet I am now able to see that my sojourn in Liberty was of very great value to me. I had for the first time the advantages of the Sabbath School. This was of great service to me. It brought me in contact with many of those Scripture doctrines so needful for my confirmation in the faith. Besides it offered me some opportunity of learning the best methods of studying the Scriptures, the want of which had hitherto been a great drawback to me. Moreover attendance on the weekly prayer meeting and the regular Sabbath services was a privilege I had never before enjoyed. I thus obtained, an idea of the benefits of the Sabbath and the sanctuary that was both new and interesting to me. I also had the advantages of the best society the place afforded. Associates I had but few, but they were young people of refinement and of piety. I had determined that I would have no associates unless they were of the right kind and I always found as many as I needed. Thus

notwithstanding I was somewhat despondent of my progress in learning. Liberty became very dear to me and for many years I regarded it as my second home.

But my school had closed and Dr. Mitchell did not propose to teach any longer. Hence some other opening must be sought for me.

At this period, Hampden Sidney College was at a very low ebb. The plowshare of division between Old School and New School Presbyterianism had dragged heavily through that part of the state. Rev. Elisha Ballantine D.D. and Rev. Stephen Taylor D.D. who had been the most prominent professors in Union Theological Seminary, were thrust out because of their adherence to New School Principles--not doctrines. In doctrine they were as sound as Calvin himself.

These gentlemen, on account of the treatment they had received at the hands of the dominant party in the Church, determined to establish a School of learning at Prince Edward C. H. (now Worsham) one principal object of which was to train young men for the ministry, especially such as belonged to that branch of the Presbyterian Church which they had espoused. Dr. Ballantine being one of the very best educators of his day, both in literary and Theological lore and Dr. Taylor being quite as eminent for his many excellent qualities as a high toned Christian gentleman, their School flourished even beyond the expectations

of its most sanguine supporters. This being situated so near Hampden Sidney and having decidedly the advantage over it in educational facilities, left the latter almost without support. Hence decided that I should go to the School at Prince Edward C.H. I therefore set out on a bright Sept. morning in the fall of 1842 from near Liberty in company with a young man who was to enter Hampden Sidney College. We had between us one old grey horse, which we rode by turns, carrying on his back what little baggage we were obliged to have. The rider went before and when he had gained a certain distance on his companion hitched his horse by the wayside and walked on. The other coming up mounted the old grey and having passed his comrade a sufficient distance likewise hitched his horse and walked on. Thus we spent the day from early morn to the going down of the sun when we arrived on the Hill and were quartered at the house of Dr. Samuel L. Graham who was the uncle of my traveling companion, and Prof. of Systematic Theology (I think) in Union Seminary. There I remained until Monday morning weary, sad and dejected. I knew no one and felt ill at ease in a place which to me was one of so much learning and where I felt as if everyone must regard me with a prejudiced eye because I was to enter a rival School.

On Monday I proceeded early to the house of Prof. Ballantine, where I was received with all the kind courtesy of old acquaint-

ance ship, and yet the Dr. could not refrain from administering a slight reproof for my having remained so long amongst the Old School on the Hill.

Although more than 45 years have since passed over my head, I remember as if it had been but yesterday that I had but one silver dollar in my pocket. But I was young and trustful, and finding a cordial welcome from Mr. Ballantine and his excellent wife, who was the daughter of Capt. Henry N. Watkins of Notoway Co., a lawyer of some eminence and an extensive farmer. I entered the school with some spirit and pursued my studies with the utmost vigor. After remaining in this hospitable family for some months, I received a offer to teach a certain number of hours daily in the family of Hugh L. Morton who lived some $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles distant across Briery River for which I was to receive my board and a small monthly salary by way of compensation. This gave me great encouragement, and I went to work with renewed energy. I now felt independent as I was relieved from the unpleasant feeling that I might be burdensome to others without being able to make a suitable return.

My walk every day to and from School kept me in vigorous health and my teaching was not only a source of recreation, but gave me additional mental training, so that my studies were a source of pleasure and my progress all that I could desire.

For two years I devoted myself to the study of Latin, Greek, Mathematics and the rudiments of Hebrew and made such progress that at the end of that time owing to my somewhat advanced age, it was thought best by my advisors that I should with as little delay as possible enter the Theological Seminary.

It was during this period that I formed the acquaintance of Mr. H. Matthews, Robert Gray, Robert C. Anderson, Jonathan Lyons and John Howard. These were all students at the Ballantine School and all subsequently entered the ministry. The three former of whom are still actively engaged in preaching the gospel, the two latter have long since entered into rest.

It was therefore determined that as soon as circumstances would permit, I should go to Union Seminary of New York City which was then the only New School Theological Seminary of any note accessible.

In order to complete arrangements for this important step, it became necessary for me to engage for a time in teaching which I did near the present station of Bonsack's on the N. & W. R. R. in the County of Botetourt. My success in teaching was far better than I could have expected. When my school closed in the summer of 1846, many of my patrons urged me strongly to continue with them. But time with me was precious and I had now obtained the means for pursuing my studies a little farther. So my whole attention was now turned to preparation for entering

The Seminary the coming fall.

This to me was a period of trial and sorrow. I knew that my mother who had been long widowed and was now far advanced in life, though she urged no objections, did not sympathize with my course. But I felt the force of the Saviour's admonition, "He that putteth his hands to the plow and looketh back, is not fit for the Kingdom of heaven". But as time and tide wait for no man, so the period arrived for my departure.

Traveling then was slow and tedious and in many respects, even less safe than at the present rapid rate. As far as Lynchburg it was by the old-fashioned stage coach. This was familiar enough to me. But from that ^{/sic/} on everything was new, and being of a very timid nature, every change filled me with new apprehensions of danger. The movements of the Packet Boat on the James River Canal soon became familiar and more or less enjoyable. But being cooped up for two whole days and one night in that close place, gliding smoothly along without any variation, except as the monotony was occasionally broken by encountering a lock, the journey became inexpressibly tedious. However at some point on the James River, (the place not now remembered) I was joined by my old schoolfellow and classmate, Jonathan Lyons. He was an Irishman by birth, had seen more of the world and had much more experience in traveling than myself. This afforded me very great relief and I put myself in a great measure under his care. And as he was also on his way to enter the Seminary,

we would be companions for the rest of the journey.

At Richmond my experiences were all new. I had never seen a town of any extent but Lynchburg, and in comparison with it Richmond seemed an immense city. Here we spent the night and the next morning were to take the train for Aquia Creek on the Potomac. I had never seen a railroad track or a train of cars. Most that I had ever heard of railroad traveling was the dangers attending it, such as collisions, plunging over precipices, and snake heads, which was occasioned by the loosening of the thin wrought rails spiked to the wooden stringers beneath, curling up and piercing through bottom of the cars and impaling anything and anybody that might happen to be in their way. Hence I was possessed by a morbid fear that I was utterly unable to shake off. However I followed my companion without a word. But the road was rough, and the coach carswayed from side to side in a manner which to my perturbed imagination threatened momentary destruction. However we reached the end of the line at Aquia Creek in safety. Here a new experience awaited me. I had never seen a larger river than the James, and a Steam Boat was, if possible, a greater terror to me than a rail road. The fearful disasters by fire and the terrible explosions of boilers, which were then of frequent occurrence on the Mississippi and the Ohio, invested the Steam Boat with peculiar horrors. But there was no alternative but to go forward.

At Washington City we again took the cars for Baltimore.

At this late period, the remainder of the journey seems like the memory of an indistinct and indefinite dream. Our arrival at Baltimore was after night, and the most that occurs to me now, is the unearthly yelling and clamor made by the colored hack drivers and porters at the Depot. Here we were again transferred to a Steam Boat by what was called the Amboy route. I have a distinct recollection of undressing and climbing up into a kind of swinging berth or hammock. Being over-powered with suspense and fatigue, "Sleep, balmy Sleep, Nature's fond nurse, Sweet restorer, come to my relief", and the rest of the journey to New York faded from my memory.

It is impossible to describe the magnitude of what that great city seemed, I entered it with a feeling of bewilderment that I never can forget. But appreciation of the wonderful had become somewhat blunted and I began to regard everything as a sort of matter of course. In this sort of dazed condition we reached the Seminary then on University Place near Ninth Street. Gray, Anderson and Howard, mentioned above, had preceeded us. Gray and Anderson were in their Senior year, while Howard was to enter the freshman with Lyons and myself. Matthews had already finished his course and entered on the work of the ministry.

Here new surprises awaited me. The Seminary building was anything but imposing. It was comparatively but its construction

was singular and apparently ill adapted for the accommodation of a large number of students as it already had. Everything was plain and inexpensive to a degree that excited surprise when compared with the magnificence displayed around it. But even a greater surprise awaited me when I was introduced to the two principal Professors, Drs. Robinson and White. My inexperienced imagination had pictured them to me as men whose countenances would flash forth genius and learning, and whose persons would at once excite the admiration of every beholder. Imagine then my astonishment, when I found them to be men of the very plainest type both in appearance and dress.

Dr. Edward Robinson, the most profound Lexicographer, Biblical critic and Hebraist of his times was a man without any personal attractions. He was heavy set, of a swarthy complexion, somewhat blear eyed, and in his carriage awkward, slow and ungraceful. He wore heavy spectacles and had about him an embarrassed air when he came before his classes or not with other men.

Dr. Henry White, though exceedingly plain in his dress and unpretending in his deportment, seemed to have been cast in a different mould. His person was tall and graceful, if he had chosen to make an exhibition of it. His face, though somewhat thin and emaciated apparently from care of imperfect health, had the Grecian Lineaments and the classic outlines clearly defined.

His eyes were bright and penetrating and had a lustre about them that bespoke the most astute genius. Yet still in all his intercourse and bearing he was as simple and unpretending as a child. In the class room, Dr. White was complete master of his position. His perceptions of truth in its various relations and bearings was clear and comprehensive. His manner of imparting instruction to others and enforcing it upon their minds was wonderful. His illustrations drawn from the ordinary affairs of life, were sometimes homely, but always to the point. His sprightliness electrified his classes, and his quick wit and sharp repartee, when occasion required, held them in the most profound respect. And woe to the man, who by some impertinent or agotistic venture fell under his scathing sarcasm. Dr. White was Prof. Systematic and Polemic Theology.

Dr. Robinson was a very different man in the class room. Although a man of the profoundest learning and of vast research in all Biblical lore, was nevertheless awkward, clumsy and sometimes every prosy before his classes. He had some hackneyed phrases and some peculiar actions which often caused merriment amongst the more fun-loving students. His manner of reaching his conclusions was by a sort of circumlocution. He would apparently flounder all around the point he wished to make, so that a student whose mind was not fully enlisted, was in danger of missing it all together. But his conclusion once reached, was always a jewel. Thus from his extensive learning and sound

judgment, his teaching was of inestimable value to those who took the trouble to treasure it up. He was Prof. of Scriptural Exigesis, Biblical Literature and Hebrew antiquity.

Dr. Halsey was our Professor Ecclesiastical and Church History. He had the appearance of a very old and infirm man. He seemed abundantly stored with information in every department of his work, as well as with a clear philosophic mind, but his bodily infirmities were so great, that he was unable to give his classes the necessary attention, and suffered greatly on that account.

A man by the name of Turner was the teacher in Hebrew. He was not distinguished for anything but his knowledge of Hebrew. He was an excellent teacher of the Hebrew language, but owing to many peculiarities, commanded but little respect from the students.

The last year of our stay in the Seminary, Dr. Thomas B. Skinner was inaugurated in the chair Sacred Rhetoric and Pastoral Theology. For many years he had been Pastor of Meecker Street Church New York, one of the most wealthy and influential Churches of the city. He was esteemed, in his day, as the ablest sermonizer in the United States.

As a man Dr. Skinner was tall and a little wiry but exceeding polite and courteous. As a Rhetorician, he was probably not surpassed by any man of his age. As a Pastor, he had had ample experience. He was therefore well fitted for the position he assumed. Besides he had other qualifications which were of great

advantage to him in his sphere. He was highly accomplished in general literature and deeply interested in his work.

We told his classes that he had entered upon his work with a full purpose of heart to give it his utmost attention and hoped that God would allow him to pursue it to the end of his day. This request was granted and he never faltered in his devotion to his work until he was called to his reward. It is due to his memory to state here that he exercised not only the functions of a Teacher but of a Pastor, always assuring his pupils that he regarded their spiritual attainments of paramount importance.

My class was at the entrance upon their third year when Dr. Skinner assumed the functions of his office. Hence his methods were new to the class and the work comparatively new to him. I will mention two incidents which occurred in the very beginning of his teaching to show how great men may sometimes make mistakes. He made a rule to hear sermons read once a week by members of the Senior class, to be criticised first by the members of the class and then by the Professor.

John Howard who was perhaps the most devotedly pious man in the class but of a melancholy turn of mind, had been preaching to a small church in Richmond, Va. during the previous vacation and had consequently gotten up several sermons, was amongst the first to read. The sermon he selected had doubtless

been eulogized by his friends and he felt greatly elated in the prospect of future usefulness. Hence he was enabled to read it with a good deal of unction. It being a new thing with the class there were but few criticisms and those of rather a commendatory character.

Dr. Skinner then took it up. He said, and his words made an indelible impression on my mind; "Brethren, this is a very pious discourse and therefore good. It has a great deal of Scripture in it and Scripture is always good. And hence it may be regarded as a good, pious discourse. But brethren, if we are to regard it as a sermon, it is utterly without merit. It has neither beginning, middle nor end".

Poor Howard's countenance fell. He was overwhelmed. His brightest hopes were withered as in a moment. He lingered about the Seminary for a time but was utterly unable to rally. His health failed and he was compelled to relinquish his studies and return home before the end of the term. However he became a useful preacher for a time until at length his mind sank into a settled melancholy and his end was a sad one.

The other case had reference to myself. I had prepared a discourse on the VIII. Ps. which had been assigned me as the subject for my lecture before Presbytery as a part of trial. I read it with the most shrinking timidity and faltering diffidence. It was taken up by the class without

a great deal of comment except on the part of one man. He made an elaborate criticism mainly with reference to its lack of unity. Dr. Skinner then, clearing his throat, which was his habit, began; "Brethren, the principal criticism passed on this discourse has been its want of unity. As I followed the reading, it strikes my mind that gross injustice has been done the discourse. I mistake not, it has not only unity, but all the elements of a finished sermon". He then took up the discourse somewhat in the line of its treatment, analyzed it, and then exhibited in all its points and bearing, thus showing the most beautiful symmetry in all its parts and elaborating the whole into a sermon which showed at every step the finishing touch of a master's hand. Everyone was now charmed with the grandeur of the conception and the perfect uniformity of its finish. But alas! I had now passed out of the unskilled hands of the author and through the polished skill of the well trained mind of Dr. Skinner.

My poor mind had never had the most remote conception of the beauty and lofty grandeur which deduced doubtless much more from the Psalm than from the discourse.

Dr. Skinner was always very kind to me. In the private review of my sermons, he invariably commended by discourses. More than once he exclaimed with apparent enthusiasm: "Naff, what a fine sermonizer you are! What a pity you can't preach! You must learn to preach". But alas! The time for me to attain to the standards which he had set up for a model preacher had long since passed away from me, and for want of early training, I was destined to spend my days in comparative obscurity.

The remainder of my Seminary course has but little cheerful

connected with it. Early in the term, my health began to decline from too rigid confinement. This grew gradually worse to the end of my course. Much of the time I was unable to attend lectures, and even when able to attend lectures, I was unable to make the requisite preparation for deriving the greatest benefit therefore.

Thus my mind became greatly depressed and I often despaired of ever reaching my home again or of entering the Ministry. And should this prove the case, I felt sure my aged mother and many of my kindred according to the flesh, would look upon it as a sort of retribution for having turned away from the faith of my fathers.

Besides I felt that my attainments had been so small as scarcely to justify the expenditure of time and labor I had undergone. What was gained seemed barely to fit me for the beginning of the course I had been pursuing. But there could be no retracing of former footsteps. The end must some how or other be reached. Victory or death were the only alternatives. So I still pressed forward until the end of my Seminary course was reached about the 20th of June 1849. I graduated with my class and received my certificate of graduation.

History will show that the year 1849 was one of the years in which New York City was visited by that terrible scourge, the Asiatic Cholera. Toward the latter end of our term hundreds of victims to the fell destroyer were daily reported. A deep

gloom had fallen the city and multitudes of men, women, and children were fleeing in every direction in search of safety from the awful scourge. But this made no diminution in the number of its victims. Those who could not flee, in many cases, seemed to become reckless of their danger and thus fell a more easy and a more certain prey to the destroyer.

In my enfeebled condition, I was thought to be especially subject to an attack. But as danger seemed to threaten more nearly, my confidence increased. I felt that in the hands of my God and Saviour I was safe whatever might betide. Hence when the attack came, as come it did, I never felt greater security in my life. A peace that was indescribable settled on my mind and I felt no fear. The attack came about three o'clock in the morning and my strength declined so rapidly, that in a short time, I lay almost as helpless as an infant.

Dr. Blakeman, then one of the best practitioners in the City and a good man, was immediately summoned and with the blessing of God under his skillful treatment, the disease was soon held in obedience. The following night was to me the most peaceful and the most absolute freedom from all suffering that I have ever experienced in a life time of more than 70 years.

From this time onward to the time of my departure from the city, my condition was greatly enfeebled. But I now felt few misgivings. My Father had sustained me thus far, and He was

able to do it still.

I now began to look forward with a good deal of eagerness when I should again tread my own native soil, breathe the invigorating atmosphere which first inflated my infant lungs, and drink of the pure and limpid waters that gurgled from the mountain sides over which my youthful limbs had so often given chase to the wild deer, the fox, the catamount and even the bear.

But notwithstanding all this, my inward feelings still lingered with the scenes through which I had been passing for the last three years. Many warm and faithful friends must be left behind, scenes of prosperity, activity and enterprise must be abandoned for the slow, plodding inaction of my Southern home. Prospects of culture, prominence and personal advancement must be abandoned for the hardships, privations and self-denial of the Southern Church. Yet still the advice of my faithful preceptors and the voice of duty pointed me back to the somewhat feeble and languishing Church of my own native domain. Already was the prejudice of the South so strong against the North, that in many places a Northern man could preach acceptably in Southern Churches. Whether justly or unjustly (too often justly) such men were suspected of meddling with the relation between master and slave which was exceedingly odious to the Southern feelings. Hence it was thought

exceedingly important that all the young men from the South should return in order to supply the need of their own native church.

Already had the opposition to American slavery become wide spread in the Northern mind. Not so much however in that objectionable form then known and characterised as "Abolitionism", a kind of conscientious commiseration of the condition of the poor, degraded down-trodden African. The fanaticism of Abolition was not yet endorsed by the better classes of Society. They still ignored the thought of being counted with the Abolitionists. They only maintained a sort of conservative opposition to the institution as injurious both to master and slave.

I remember on one occasion walking the streets with a gentleman of this class, an intelligent Elder in the Presbyterian Church, a good man and a man of acknowledged piety and usefulness. Passing a company of street cleaners, dirty, ragged, unkempt and uncultivated, I said to him, "Mr. Joy, we never witness such scenes as that in our Southern cities. Our slaves are by far better provided for, by far better clad, by far more intelligent and happy than these creatures before us". "Ah well", he said, "That may be, but they are still slaves. These men are free and there is a possibility for some of them to rise from their degradation and become something better. But no such opportunity is afforded the slave. No matter how favorable his condition may be he is nevertheless a slave and so must his posterity needs be after him

as long as their bondage remains". There was so much apparent truth in this that I could not deny the allegation. And yet I felt what I now, after an experience of 40 years, feel with greater force than I did then, that the most favorable condition the Negro can occupy, is that of servitude to a superior race that acknowledges the binding character of divine revelation. The chain of African slavery in the Southern states has now been severed for well nigh 30 years and yet the Negro masses are sinking gradually to deeper degradation.

But the time came for my departure from that great city. With the aid of Lyons and other friends, my arrangements for the journey were completed. And in a state of great physical debility and extreme mental dejection, leave was taken of many kind and sympathizing friends and the journey was begun with Lyons as my traveling companion. But my hopes of reaching home were still but slight. We arrived at Philadelphia on the evening of the first day where we were detained until the following morning. Here we resolved to visit the Girard College as probably the only chance we should ever have, it being a law of the institution that no minister of the gospel should ever enter its premises.

A very slight recollection of what we saw now remains with me save that it was a ponderous marble structure and that the marble statue of its projector was stationed within the entrance hall as if to guard it against the unlawful entrance of Priests and Priestcraft.

this one thing however indelible impression on my mind. In attempting to ascend the marble stairway to the top of the building, my strength gave way utterly and I sank on the marble step to await the return of my companions. It was with difficulty that I regained my Hotel and my feelings were of the most despondent character. But a cup of tea, a night's repose and a substantial breakfast refreshed me and I felt stronger than I had for many days. So our journey was resumed and that evening, which was Saturday, brought us to Washington City, to the house of my former preceptor and excellent friend, the rev. Elisha Ballantine, now Pastor of the "F. Street, Presbyterian Church". Here we remained with him and his delightful family, until Monday morning in the enjoyment of all the privileges and freedom of actual home.

Monday morning we again set out on board one of the Steamers running between that City and Aquia Creek. On that beautiful morning as I sat on the deck of that Steam Boat with the breezes of the Potomac fanning my pallid cheeks, I enjoyed a feeling of serenity amounting almost to irrepressible joy that I shall never forget.

The remainder of my journey home made but a feeble impression on my mind save that my strength gradually increased as I neared the end of my journey. Richmond seemed almost like a deserted village and the inaction was painful indeed. The traveling by Packet Boat from there to Lynchburg proved inexpressibly tedious and thence to Liberty and the Big Lick, by Stage coach insufferable.

But I now began to be greeted by old acquaintances and friends, who received me with so much cordiality that I was almost overwhelmed with gratitude to that kind Providence which had brought me back again as it were to my father's house in safety.

I arrived at the Big Lick (Roanoke City, was not then thought of by the most far seeing eye) on the evening of the third of July. The next morning I set out again 10 miles on horseback to the home of my nativity and the bosom of my family.

It is a somewhat singular coincidence that counting back from this date fourth of July 1889, it is just 40 years since my return from the Seminary to the home and scenes of my childhood. There were the old familiar trees, the rocks, the rills, the everlasting hills, all unchanged and as fully recognized as though we had been separated but a day. Whatever changes may have taken place in me they remained the same. The Great Father had taken care of them and me. And I impressed anew with that beautiful sentiment uttered by the Psalmist, "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem; so is the Lord round about them that fear Him".

I was received by my aged mother and my kindred without ostentation, but with the utmost cordiality and kindness. I had gone forth from them ruddy strong and robust. I returned with sunken visage, blanched cheeks and feeble carriage. This was a trouble and much concern to my anxious mother now in the 75th year of her age. But the invigorating air of my native hills and the careful nursing

of a doting mother soon brought back something of my wonted and healthful appearance. Thus time brought familiarity with what nature had failed to supply and old things assumed their wonted course in the household. No censures were cast on the course I had pursued, on my part, there were no discussions raised in view of the different views we had imbibed. Each party was willing to accord honesty and sincerity to the other. Hence there could be no grounds for discord.

I was brought now face to face with actual and real life. I had endeavored to prepare myself for a position, for which as yet I felt myself but poorly competent either in body or in mind. The church to which I was attached was feeble, poor and struggling under embarrassments. While its ministers were not numerous, it had but few places of much promise to offer those just entering the ministry. Hence in my enfeebled despondent condition the matter of what I was to do, was a source of no little concern to me. I was naturally of a despondent temperament. I was not yet licensed to preach. My health was greatly impaired. My patrimony was exhausted. I did not feel myself able to fill a position of any prominence even if my church had one to offer. Consequently the future had a gloomy aspect for me. But I would not despair. My heavenly Father had sustained me in times of great trial and I would trust him farther. He would not forsake me now.

In the midst of perplexities like these a proposition came from the Home Mission Committee located in Richmond and in the hands of

such men as Samel thus reed, Janett and others of sacred memory to go to the Eastern Shore of Virginia and take charge of the Holmes Church. It was indeed a startling proposition--so far away and so utterly averse to any preconceived plans or expectations--and yet there appeared no alternative. My mind was soon made up. I had thrown myself in the channel and would drift wherever the hand of Providence might guide.

The Presbytery (Hanover) which had the care over me met in September 1849 at Price Edward G. H. (now 1890 Worsham). Whither I repaired and appeared for license. The ordeal was a terrible one. I was so overwhelmed with embarrassment that I was almost wholly unable to answer questions with which I was perfectly familiar. The minister who conducted the examination was an old man and a man of great sternness in appearance. The questions he propounded had mainly the appearance of an attempt to entangle me in my replies. So upon the whole every thing seemed to conspire to produce in me greater embarrassment. But the ordeal was passed through and I was licensed as a probationer to preach the gospel. What opinion the Presbytery formed of my attainments I never knew, nor was it of any great consequence to me. The burden was upon me to preach the gospel to the best of my ability and there was no release from that warfare.

I returned to my mountain home, made what arrangements were necessary and about the first of November following set out on my

long and then tedious journey to Northampton County on the peninsula between the Chesapeake and the Atlantic. The parting with my friends on this occasion was perhaps the most trying I ever had. I was entering upon a new and untried sphere of life and of duty. My health was still poor and my confidence in my ability to succeed still poorer. Traveling then was slow and irksome. At the Big Lick (now Roanoke City) I took the stage coach for Lynchburg. The passengers consisted of the Hon. Andrew Jackson on his way to Congress from East Tennessee and subsequently President of the United States, immediately after the Assassination of President Lincoln, in those times which tried men's souls, the Hon. Isaac Dunn on his way to the Legislature of Va. from Washington Co. another somewhat elderly man, whose name has escaped me, also on his way to the Legislature of Virginia from Patrick County and myself on a mission, when properly considered more important than either of theirs. And yet in the humble estimate I had of myself, I felt myself by far the least, as I was also the youngest of the crowd. I think the word crowd in this connection is the proper word. For although not jumbled, we were brought in direct contact in the stage coach, whatever distinction there may have been amongst us. At any rate, we were soon on equal terms and each knowing the distinction of the others, conversation soon became free and unconstrained.

I had known something of Johnson's career and was not a special admirer of his, but he seemed to take special notice of me, gave me

a full account of difficulties he had to contend with in reaching the position he then occupied and pictured the possibilities in life for a young man who would make good use of his opportunities. With all the calumnies that were afterwards heaped upon him in his political arena, I always felt that Andrew Johnson merited more than was accorded him.

Mr. Dunn appeared to be a solid man and a man of character, though not a man of many words.

The old gentleman from Patrick particularly attracted my observation. His dress was simple and of his own native mountain homespun. In manners and also in feelings, he was as primitive as his dress. In character he seemed pure and utterly without guile. In knowledge and the conventionalities of life, he seemed absolutely a child. I feel sure he told me that was the first time he had ever been out of his native County. At any rate he knew nothing of traveling and was timid and shrinking as girls of sixteen once were. The other two travelers seemed rather to ignore the old man and I think he felt it. But I must confess that my sympathies went out towards him. I had not forgotten my trials and perplexities in my first travels. So I took occasion to give him all the attention and aid I could afford him and he soon showed that he was capable of appreciating every attention I was able to bestow upon him. And by the time we reached Lynchburg he had worked himself wholly under my guidance and care. He seemed afraid

to take a step without consulting me and indeed unwilling to be separated from me under any circumstances.

From Lynchburg to Richmond traveling was then altogether by packet Boat on the Canal. This method was slow and primitive but safe and congenial. The age of Rush and Boom was not yet thrust upon our people. Men and women took but little note of time. Safe arrival at their points of destination was all they asked. Business with them was one thing and pleasure another. Hence if business and pleasure could be combined, their highest ambition had been attained. In the words of a dear friend I once had, "People were not yet too wise to be happy." And indeed I think on board of Packet Boat, was better fitted for real social enjoyment than any place I ever met with. There was not the slightest apprehension of danger. Everyone felt that he had an equal right with everyone else. Everyone felt free to approach everyone else on equal terms. And there was no concern for anything but for everyone to spend the time on pleasantly as possible. The distance was known and the time to be occupied in passing over it was fixed and there was no escape either from it or the Boat.

In passing down the James River Canal, a little incident occurred with my Patrick friend that was amusing to everyone but himself. The Berths for sleeping were, according to some rule, assigned according to the number of the ticket. It so happened that the old gentleman's No. threw him in close proximity with the stove that was kept in a

state of red heat all night. After all was still and every one seemed in a state of quiet repose, the heat of the stove and probably some apprehensions he may have had, threw my old friend into a restless dream, and all at once his shrill and excited voice rang through the length and breadth of the Boat, "Don't let any one escape from the boat, they've got my pocketbook". This produced a universal thrill. The guards rushed to the door and everyone roused up in a state of alert. When after a moment or two, the old man meekly said, "I beg your pardon, I must have been dreaming. I've got my pocketbook." A suppressed titter went all around the tiers of Bunks and all was silent again.

The next day my old friend was terribly mortified at what had happened and clung to me with greater tenacity than ever. That evening we reached Richmond. I piloted the old man to a Hotel and there I left him. I have often wondered how he got through the Legislature and what finally became of him but there is no response that ever comes back.

From Richmond to Norfolk, the traveling was mainly by steamboat. After spending the night in Richmond and receiving instructions from Messrs. Reed and Genett, I took the boat for Norfolk. It was my first view of the grand old, historic James below Richmond. Every step was new and every object full of interest. As we wound around its serpentine course and glided buoyantly over its placid bosom, I had but little conception of the scenes that were destined to be enacted

along its majestic course during my short pilgrimage on earth. Already historic as the home of the first settlers of Virginia and of their heroic defense against the marauding savages of the wilderness, it was destined to become more historic still by the heroism of Virginians of a later day in the defense of their homes and their civil rights against the armies and prowess of that government which Virginia herself had been the fostering mother.

The same evening brought me to Norfolk. Here I was detained about three days awaiting a boat to convey me to the Eastern Shore. This seagirt city seemed then in 1849 but a scattering unswept and uncomely town in comparison with Philadelphia and New York. What a change has come over it in the course of forty years! Then it consisted of a few dirty, sleepy inactive wharves, now the busy whirring railroad center and great naval emporium of the Southern States. The third day of my stay in Norfolk, I boarded a small, rickety, old steamer bound for the western shore of Northampton Co. There was rather a brisk November wind fanning the bosom of the grand old Chesapeake which stirred its surface into numberless little breakers or whitecaps and caused our feeble barque to toss, careen and groan as if in the last agonies of endurance. Being by nature and habit nothing more than a common land lubber, I soon experienced all the qualms of real seasickness. But the voyage was short and a few hours of toiling on the bosom of the Bay brought me safely to our destined wharf. Then for

the first time I set foot on the beautiful and interesting soil of the Eastern shore of Virginia-an entire stranger in an absolutely strange land. Instead of the everlasting hills, which stand as impregnable, bulwarks of defense, I stood on a narrow neck of land, level as the floor of my native cottage and skirted on either side by vast bodies of salt water. It seemed to me like Fairy Land and I felt as if the very foundations on which I stood were wavering and insecure.

But I soon became reassured. I was met by an old fashioned Gig and one horse with a sable driver who informed me that I was expected at Mass Robert A. Young's who lived on the opposite side of the Peninsula. So I meekly took my seat by his side and without question allowed him to conduct me whithersoever he would. A drive through the pine forest and along a smooth sandy road of an hour and half brought me safely to the residence of mine host. This stood a little ways above tide water and overlooked certain Bays and Inlets of the great Atlantic, but her main waters were still beyond the reach of human vision.

The family was small, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. and their two small children, besides numerous servants. My reception was cordial enough, but rather formal. Mr. Young was kind but morose and somewhat reserved. His wife was modest, retiring and of rather a shrinking disposition. They made me comfortable in my surroundings and treated me kindly. But they failed to make me feel at home. They did not understand the longings of my nature. My heart yearned for sympathy and companionship, while it received only formal attention and constrained courtesy. He was th^e

only Elder in the church and I believe the only male member. The appointment had been made for me the following Sunday and Mr. Young conveyed me to the church about seven or eight miles from his house. The audience was composed of fine looking ladies and gentlemen, such as you rarely meet with in more modern times. For they were composed of the immediate descendants of the best families of England who had settled that interesting section of Virginia. I preached as best I could in my embarrassment and was met with all the cordiality and courtesy by the people I could have desired.

But the vocabulary of the old English names I found was to me almost like that of a new language. Nottingham, Goffigan and others of like difficult orthography were the names attached to nearly all of the principal families of my charge. But they were not merely English in name. They retained all those elevating and ennobling qualities of hospitality that characterized the first settlers of Virginia. From the first occupancy of the Peninsula by immigration from Old England, there had been but little intermingling of any inferior element to vitiate or mullify either their purity of blood or of social customs and manners. It was the only community in which I ever found old Virginia hospitality unalloyed.

So far as social privileges were concerned, my stay amongst them was rendered exceedingly agreeable. Although there were but few if any of the male members of the families connected with

the church, yet their cordiality and kindness towards me was unbounded.

After two or three months, circumstances rendered unsuitable for me to remain in the Young family and it was thought best that I should be removed to Eastville, the county seat, as the most central position and one in which I would be brought in more frequent contact with people from all parts of the county. I found quarters in the house of one Tully A. Wise who kept the principal and if my memory serves me right, the only hotel of the place. Poor Tully was a reckless, improvident, jolly sort of fellow, fond of amusement and good cheer and taking but little thought for the morrow. But his wife was one of the excellent of the earth. She was refined, kind, hospitable, of an excellent Christian spirit and a consistent member of the Episcopal Church. From her I received true Christian sympathy and with her I felt at home.

However my health failed to improve, and as the spring opened, I felt more and more the depression of a malarial atmosphere. Hence as there had been no special steps taken by the church to retain my services, I made my arrangements to leave after the meeting of the Presbytery, which was to take place in the church under my care about the last of April.

Had there been an efficient Eldership, I have no doubt, I should have remained there perhaps indefinitely. But there being only one elder and he a man of inefficient and morose temperament, the business men of the congregation were not apprized of the true condition of

things until after all arrangements were made for my departure. Then they gathered about me and besought me to remain and they would pledge themselves for my support. Dreading however the feebleness of my health and the effects which the climate might have on me in my enfeebled condition, I felt it to be my wisest course to decline their kind offer. So I returned to Richmond without improvement either in health or in spirits. From Richmond, the Home Mission Com. sent me out on an exploring expedition through the South Western Counties of Piedmont. As soon therefore as arrangements could be made, I set out on horseback, in company with a friend who was coming in this direction as far as Christiansburg. At that place, I took leave of my friend and guide and directed my course across the County of Floyd which was not properly embraced within my exploring tour, towards Patrick G. H. This point I reached on Saturday evening about the middle of May where I was kindly received and entertained by a couple of Northern Presbyterian families who had settled there for the purpose of establishing a Tannery. They were plain but substantial folks and excellent citizens. An appointment was soon circulated for preaching the next day. I preached to a considerable audience and was introduced to a very few other Presbyterians. A principal family by the name of Staples, the parents of Judge Waller Staples who has more recently figured so largely in politics and in the civil effort of the state, lived there and some of its members belonged to the Presbyterian Church. There I was entertained in an elegant manner

until Tuesday when I felt it my duty to proceed on my journey.

I was directed to spend the night at the house of one Thomas Penn, a wealthy Tobacconist, who lived on the way towards Henry C. H. Here a kind and hearty reception was given. That evening and night the rain fell in torrents. Smith's River, a rapid mountain stream, which at a mile or two beyond crossed my road, was said to be impassible. So I found my way impeded for two or three days. But I was never more kindly and hospitably treated. Although a Methodist family, they showed me every attention heart could desire. That kind home was left with feelings of regret.

My next day's journey was to the house of a friend and old schoolmate, Dr. Henry Peters. Our meeting was cordial and we spent an agreeable night together. From there I proceeded the next day to Henry C. H. My reminiscences of my visit to that place are rather vague and not so agreeable. Not however that I was not cordially received and pleasantly entertained. But the name of mine host has faded from my memory and I can recall nothing about his house or his household. One thing however is more vividly impressed on my memory. I was invited to preach at night. I entered the pulpit with a long and closely written manuscript. The church was lighted or rather obscured with the convential "Tallow dips" of the times. I could not see, became confused and floundered woefully in the dark. I was greatly mortified.

From there I passed through the Southern part of Franklin Co.

and into Pittsylvania and passing by the Court House, I stopped for the night at the house of Col. Clark, an elderly gentleman of the Old School Presbyterian persuasion. He seemed to be a man of considerable wealth and well prepared to accommodate strangers. But his treatment was or seemed to be quite formal. I attributed it to his prejudice against me on account of our different church relations. This feeling was enough to destroy my enjoyment. The next day I crossed Staunton River and came to a village or hamlet on the Campbell Side called Leesville. There I found my old friend Rev. Wm. H. Matthews, who is still living at Pittsylvania C.H. I was at home once more. From thence I returned to Liberty, now Bedford City, and thence to my native home Franklin County.

In my feeble condition, I found myself well worn down, but had found no place that promised much for Presbyterianism. So after making out my report to the Home Mission Society in Richmond, by the advice of my friend who had accompanied me to Christiansburg, I determined to penetrate farther into Southwest Virginia.

About the first of June 1850 I turned my face westward, not knowing whither I went. West of Fayette Montgomery County I knew no one. Having spent my first night out with a dear relative at that place, I was directed to proceed up the North Fork of Roanoke River and then cross the mountain to Blacksburg. I reached that place by dinner and after a refreshing meal and rest at the house

one Peterman, I again proceeded on my way.

That afternoon my eyes fell on the clear rolling waters of the New River. Having been ferried across safely, I pursued the Peppers Ferry road through an uninhabited forest way for some distance which brought me to a newly constructed log house in an opening in forest. On inquiry about a place to stay that night, they informed me that there was no house on the way for several miles and that even the first house was not in sight of the road. I asked the lady if she could not give me quarters for the night. She said she could if I could put up with their fare. So I dismounted, turned my horse into a good strong cot and settled myself for the night. The people were beginners in life. Everything was new. The fare was excellent and well served. The air was pure and refreshing. And I don't know I ever spent a more agreeable night.

The next day I passed the present site of Dublin and took dinner at Newbern the county seat of Pulaski. That afternoon I reached the house of Capt. Joseph Howe, an Elder in the Draper's Valley Church and renowned for his hospitality and kind entertainment. I was so kindly received by the whole family, consisting of the parents and several handsome intelligent daughters that I felt at home once more.

On the following day I was accompanied by one of the young ladies of the family to the residence of the Rev. George Painter,

then in the zenith of his usefulness, a man of excellent spirit and widespread usefulness, and influence throughout Southwestern Virginia and East Tennessee. Mrs. Painter was one of those pure self-sacrificing women that shrank from no duty and bore every burden with cheerfulness. She impressed everyone with the loftiness of her Christian Character and managed her household with all that Christian grace which renders home so attractive. The family consisted of nine sons and one daughter, all sprightly, cheerful and happy. Taking it all in, it seemed truly a model home.

It so happened that this was the day before the beginning of a Communion meeting at New Dublin Church in the eastern part of the county. Mr. Painter was to be assisted in the meeting by Rev. James King the proprieter of the present site of Bristol Tenn. and Rev. Levi R. Morrison, pastor of Glade Spring Church. These earnest men had ridden on horseback, the former 100 miles, the latter, some 75 miles simply to assist Mr. Painter in an ordinary sacramental meeting. But it was a meeting long to be remembered. From every neighborhood of the county North of the river the tribes appeared to assemble themselves to worship. On foot, on horseback, in wagons, in carriages of every description, the people, white and colored, flocked together in that beautiful grove, made sacred by its long occupancy as a place of reunion of the first families of Wythe and Pulaski. There were two services each day. After the first there

was an intermission of some hour, when refreshments of every kind that the most fastidious could desire were served in the refreshing shade of the majestic forest trees, of which everyone was expected to partake freely.

The scene was new to me and somewhat bewildering. I had been in dense crowds in New York City and on the streets of Washington. There however every one was a stranger to every one else and each one interested only in the safety of his own life and limb and the gratification of his own curiosity. But here every one was known to all the rest, and knew in turn every one else. It was indeed a time of not only social, but of sacred enjoyment that carried its influence far into the future and was instrumental in moulding substantial character.

By the request of the brethren it fell to my lot to fill one of the appointments. I preached with very great embarrassment and felt as if I must have made a very unfavorable impression on all who heard me. But after the services, the three ministers and one or two Elders took me to the rear of the church and consulted with me in reference to my coming into the bounds of their Presbytery. The result of the conferences was that they invited me to go over the territory extending from New River to the Tennessee line and select any position not occupied where I thought I could do good and they would sustain me in it.

After obtaining some general information as to the most

promising fields for usefulness, I once more wended my way back to my native home with a view of making preparation to enter upon the new scene of my labors.

On the 20th July 1850, after taking leave of my aged mother and kindred at home, I mounted my horse to cross the spurs of the Blue ridge and to ascend the Alleghany into Floyd County. There I spent a night with friends and then proceeded into Carroll County in the neighborhood of Bethesda Church where an appointment had been made for me to preach the following Saturday and Sunday. This was one of the fields that had been pointed out to me as a place of settlement if I should regard it as a field promising usefulness. I found the people in a very primitive state, being cut off from the rest of the world by lofty mountains on the one hand and the wild and rugged passage of New River on the other. Consequently they were extremely domestic in all their habits and content to live in that easy tenor that literally takes no thought for the morrow. But with all the disadvantages to which they were subjected, they were exceedingly kind, hospitable and religious. Indeed, I think I found some as bright types of genuine piety in that community as I have met with in any section in Southwestern Virginia. Their type of religion was drawn directly from the Confession of Faith and other standards of the Presbyterian Church. Indeed these with the Bible were the only books they had and they had read and studied them with a diligence

that showed its impress in the moulding of their religion.

I filled the appointment which had been made for me, but did not feel as if I could content myself to live where the wheels of progress were so traveled by the too great contentment of the inhabitants. So on Monday morning I again set out, first for Hillsville where there was one man who had been reared up under Presbyterian auspices, but who mingling with the World and neglect of personal obligations had dwindled into a state of indifference, and if my memory serves me right, had united with some other denomination. Hence there was nothing for me to do at that place. So after a night's sojourn there, the next place marked out for my visitation was Old Town, or Grayson Old Court House. There I had been told there resided a Presbyterian family from Wytheville and I pressed forward with some hope that I might find a family of better privileges and coming more within the scope of the tastes I had acquired from a city life and refined society. I found on inquiry that the gentleman kept the only Hotel of the place and that he was at home with his family. I therefore presented myself as a traveler and was received and attended according to the customs of the place. But in the low state of my physical and mental condition, I was exceedingly depressed. After the long period of more than forty years, I remember as if it had been but yesterday, that I felt as if it had reached the utmost limits of this mundane sphere, and that another half mile in the same direction would bring me to

the famous point, known as "The Jumping off place". However I made myself known to the Landlord and told him the object of my visit. He treated me with all the courtesy and kindness I could have asked-- told me to make myself at home, took me into his private apartments and introduced me to his wife and two grown daughters, who represented the Presbyterianism of the family, and contrasted with most others I had met since leaving home, seemed to be truly refined and cultivated ladies.

After dinner the gentleman told me that his business would call him from home for several days, but that I could remain with his family as long as it suited my convenience and make his house my home, but as to getting a congregation to preach to that was out of the question. Feeling that this was not a place for me to loiter and after resting awhile, I again mounted and directed my course across the country towards the Grayson Sulphur Springs.

I arrived at this place about sundown, and whether willingly or unwillingly, I was compelled for want of more congenial quarters to put up for the night. It was a rude, unimproved country watering place, situated on the banks of New River, not far from the present site of Ivanhoe.

Here the wealthy and pleasure seeking people of Wyth and adjacent counties were accustomed to assemble during the heated months of Summer, ostensibly for their health, but I think most likely, in most cases, for the purpose of spending a month or two in that free and

unconstrained state to which many feel themselves entitled when they subject themselves to a kind of primitive life, such as living in tents, cabins and temporary structures.

At least such was the impression made on me by my one night's sojourn among them. At an early hour, a large room in a rude log building was cleared and exhilarating strains of music, from flute and violin, seemed to be the signal for all to assemble. At any rate such was the effect. Many others with myself were soon arranged in the hall of merriment and the dance begun.

The music, which was discoursed by colored servants, who for the time being felt as free as their masters and in many instances enjoyed themselves no doubt equally as well, was charming and indeed exquisite.

It was truly a gay scene. The whole company dancers and spectators was composed of elegantly dressed, fine looking and accomplished. The merriment doubtless continued far into the "woe ema' hours ayant the twall". But being overcome by the fatigues of my journey, I soon retired to my cabin where I lost in sleep the gayety and revelry of the evening and awoke the next morning refreshed by the slumbers of the past night.

In after days, I recognized amongst the best citizens of this section many of those who were participants in the gayeties the night I spent at the Grayson Springs.

From thence I wended my way down New River to the Wyth Lead Mines. This was a place that had been pointed to me as a field of possible usefulness and one that was in special need of Missionary work. But to

my mind, there appeared no opening for me. I had no taste for the kind of work that was presented to me there.

I wanted the countenance and support of active intelligent Christians to brace me up. And I wanted the society of energetic men and especially of cultivated women to arouse me from the despondency into which my enfeebled state of health had plunged me.

Hence I pursued my course back again into Pulaski Co. Draper's Valley, to the house of my subsequent patron and life long friend, Rev. George Painter. There I found everything I so much needed, home, sympathy, Christian intercourse, refined society and moral encouragement.

But as all earthly things are destined to come to an end, so my stay in this much desired and much needed retreat, had also to cease.

Another field that had been suggested to me as a place of promise, remained still unexplored by me. But this field lay beyond lofty ranges of mountains and vast uninhabited regions, as much unknown to me, at that time, as the Congo Free State is to-day, May 26th 1891, to many of our Sabbath Schools.

This was Tazewell Co. a county then noted amongst the counties of S. W. Va. for its rude, uncultivated and even lawless inhabitants. But to this county, I was directed to go as the last field of probable usefulness in the bounds New River Presbytery. And having put my hands to the plow, I could not go back.

But to go alone into an unknown region, fifty or sixty miles from the nearest Presbyterian Church was an undertaking that required rather more moral courage, or Christian fortitude, if that phraseology be

preferred, than in my weak and despondent state, I was able to command.

My friend and counsellor, Mr. Painter, probably perceiving this, directed me to go to Marion in Smyth Co. where I would find the Rev. David F. Palmer, pastor of the church at that place, assuring me that he would take pleasure in accompanying me across the mountains, if so that he could leave home at that time.

So I went to Marion as directed and found Mr. Palmer, not only willing but anxious to go with me and pilot me to the new field. But it turned out in the Providence of God, that his oldest child was extremely ill and in consequence it was settled for the time that he could not leave home. But in the generosity of his heart, he prevailed on me to remain with him a few days in the hope that some improvement in the condition of his son might still enable him to leave home.

So at his solicitation, I remained and found there a flourishing female school under the auspices of Rev. Philips Wood and his wife. There were gathered in that school quite a number of young ladies who in after years became prominent members both of society and in the Presbyterian throughout South Western Va. and it affords pleasure to say that some of them remain to this day in faithful labors for the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom, "while some of them have fallen asleep".

Mr. Wood was an active zealous worker in the church and in connection with the arduous labors of the school room, he also served the Glade Spring Church as stated supply.

It so turned out that on the Sabbath succeeding my arrival in Marion, he was to hold a Communion Service in Glade Spring. And as there was but little change in the condition of Mr. Palmer's child, the brethren counseled that I should go with Mr. Wood and remain with him until the following Monday and then renew my journey to Tazewell C.H.

This I did, though somewhat reluctantly as I felt anxious to know what awaited me beyond the blue mountains, which were not plainly in view. What transpired at Glade Spring has, after this long lapse of years in a great measure, faded from my memory. But the events of my journey seem almost as fresh to me as the day after they had occurred.

On Sunday night, I was kindly and cordially entertained by Arthur Hutton then a prominent ruling Elder in Glade Spring Church, and living on his farm some three or four miles from the Church in the direction of my prospective journey for the next day.

Monday came and being able to travel, there was now nothing left for me but to pursue my journey alone.

So having obtained the best description of the road I was to travel, I set out at an early hour with a view, if possible, of reaching Tazewell C.H. that night.

So with considerable trepidation, I wended my way over rough roads, across streams of water and rugged mountains towards a land that I knew not and amongst a strange people.

Many a time as a view of a long stretch of rugged mountains road

presented itself, my heart almost failed me. But I could not go back, so I must needs go forward.

At one time, as I was passing through a dense forest up a long mountain slope, I saw in the distance, a man approaching me from the opposite direction and my heart failed me. I was afraid of him. In my fears, I conjectured that he might be one of those rough mountain characters who might in some unpleasant way assail me.

But there was no means of retreat. There was no possible way of avoiding a meeting with him face to face.

So I rode on, not boldly but trembling in my stirrups. And what was my surprise when I came up to him and found him to be a man with whom I had met several years before in friendly intercourse in Bedford Co. and was in fact the brother of my most intimate friend of said county.

It is needless to say that we were mutually surprised and glad to see each other. But I felt greatly rebuked on account of my want of faith and trust in the gracious care of my loving Saviour.

Hence I summoned new courage, and although weak and weary, I pressed forward and finally reached the summit of the last high mountain whose lofty height had to be scaled before reaching my destination. From this elevation I could look forward and catch a glimpse of the fertile valleys and the green mountains with which in the near future my eyes were to become so familiar. I had now only to descend the circuitous road down the Northern slope of Clinch Mountain to be brought into Tazewell proper.

The first house I arrived at at the foot of the mountain was a substantial brick farm house, situated on the bank of a beautiful stream of water and in the midst of green pastures. I approached with gratitude in my heart for the goodness of God to the children of men.

I approached the house and was met by a goodlooking matronly woman who received me cordially and ministered to my necessities with an unsparing hand.

Feeble and worn as was my condition, I could not get my own consent to leave an asylum so congenial to my feelings for the uncertainty of finding another. So the kindness and hospitality extended to me by the family for the night is still remembered with feelings of gratitude after a lapse of more than forty years. I had thus unawares and unexpectedly arrived at the house of one of the principal and best citizens of Tazewell Co. Squire Wm. Thompson from whose family name, the beautiful valley extending from Burk's Garden to the Cove in which he lived derived its name, that of Thompson's valley.

But my stay could only be for the night. My journey was not yet ended. So on Tuesday morning with invigorated strength and enlivened spirits, the end of my journey was eagerly sought. But there still remained some twelve or more miles before Tazewell C.H. would be reached. And in making these, I had to pass up the main valley between two lofty ranges of mountains covered to their summits with dense forests of immense trees looking as if the foot of man could never have invaded

them. After a distance of some six or eight miles there was a gulch or gorge running through one of the mountains leading from the valley I was in to the one in which the C.H. is situated. This had also to be traversed. It was at that time almost in a primoval state. A small stream of limpid water dashed and splashed over the numerous precipices, large boulders projected from the seemingly almost perpendicular sides of the gorge and a mere bridle path, precipitous, cragged and jogged marked the way of the traveller. What a relief it was to emerge from such a cavern to behold once more spread out before the eye beautiful fields clothed with the richest verdure and grazed upon by herds of cattle! I had now reached the Fincastle or Botetourt and Cumberland Gap Turnpike and was in three miles of Jeffersonville, the county seat of Tazewell County. Here I had letters of introduction to the principal families of the place, Squire Wm. Cox, Dr. John M. Estill and Isaac M. Benaham, and having arrived early in the day, I had plenty of time to look around me with admiration and wonder at the stupendous works of the Almighty as displayed in huge piles of Mountain ranges which on every side rose in towering heights until they seemed almost to pierce the sky.

I was received as an inmate into the family of Squire Cox and treated with all the cordiality, kindness and affection they could have bestowed on one of their own sons.

Whatever of religious sentiment Squire Cox possessed was inclined towards Presbyterianism. But being rather an intelligent man and a

great reader especially of the English Periodicals of the day, he had unfortunately imbibed some skeptical notions which held him aloof from any active part in religious matters. Still he was an orderly man and a good citizen, and was indeed so far from opposing religion openly, that he showed it countenance by opening his doors to the ministers of all denominations and treating them with the greatest hospitality.

But Mrs. Amanda Cox was a member of the Presbyterian Church, and her name was the synonym for everything that was generous, benevolent and of a godly sort. The influence she exerted for good by her cheerful, happy self-sacrificing intercourse amongst the people of her day, will never be fully estimated in this world. She still lives and although at a very advanced age retains all the cheerfulness of youth. Her sister, a younger woman, unmarried and a member of the Methodist Church, resided with her and was also a woman of remarkable cheerfulness and flew of good spirits. Besides these, three sons nearly grown and a number of servants comprised the household.

It was into this family, I was received and where I remained from the 6th day of August 1850, the date of my arrival, to some time in the succeeding November.

Although by far too retiring in my disposition and too shrinking in my intercourse with the people, I soon formed acquaintances and the best people of the community, not only gave me countenance but extended to me

the most cordial welcome and the most abundant hospitality.

But it was not mere countenance and support that I was longing for. It was some tokens of encouragement in the great work in which I had come to engage. Here to my inexperienced eye there was the barest ground of hope. In that then large county there were only three openly avowed Presbyterians, Mrs. Cox, Mrs. Estill and Mrs. Benham, but these three godly women in the prime of life proved to be a host within themselves. In face of the fact that the whole county so far as any religious influence was exerted, was wholly under Methodist control, they stood up boldly, fearlessly in defense and in the support of that faith which they believed had once been delivered to the Saints.

Still the prospect seemed to forebode but little of encouragement. But as I had gone over the whole field and had nothing of better promise to look forward to. Hence for the present, there was nothing to do but to remain.

How to begin the work in such a vast uncultivated and to all appearance, unsympathizing field, was a source of no little perplexity to me. But as there was no appointment for religious services in town, notice was circulated that I would preach in the Methodist Church at 11 o'clock in the morning. The interval was spent in forming the acquaintance of the principal citizens about town and occasionally one from the surrounding country. And it affords no pleasure to record that

I was received by every one with evident marks of cordiality and respect. Friendships were formed during that week of life-long continuance. Still the uncertainty of what was to be the result of my first appearance before the public caused the time to hang heavily on my hands. However as it is the natural order of things for time to pass heavily or otherwise, Saturday evening at length arrived and with it an Episcopal minister who was agent for the American Bible Society. Finding how matters stood for Sabbath morning, he at once besought me for the privilege of occupying the morning hour as he would have only the one opportunity and I could make another appointment for the afternoon. In this I cheerfully, if not gladly, acquiesced as it would afford me the opportunity of seeing how matters were conducted in that new and untried field. So the old brother preached and presented his cause in the morning and my turn was set for the afternoon. Nothing of special interest occurred that day. The thing that impressed me most deeply was the smallness of the congregation. At dinner, at the house of Mrs. Cox, I asked her if there was any special reason why there were so few at church. With apparent surprise she replied, "Why we had the largest congregation to-day we have had for months."

I then learned that the Methodist minister in charge had discontinued his appointments in town because of the hopelessness of the place. And indeed this gives an insight of the condition the whole field. The

Methodists had held the entire sway there for many years past. So that without "a man to sharpen the face of man" religion had relapsed into a sort of indifference and semi-infidelity.

The next week I commenced the exploration of Thompson's Valley. Over that rich and beautiful valley I found scattered, for the most part, a people of high character and of abundant resources though as yet in quite a primitive state. Going from house to house, often accompanied by one neighbor to the house of another, I was everywhere received with the great cordiality and with the broadest hospitality. At every house the word was left that I would preach at their usual place of meeting on the following Sabbath. Sunday morning came and I was piloted by a friend through a magnificent woodland which might well have served for one of "God's first temples" to a little old dilapidated school house with one or more logs rotted from the sides leaving large open spaces between, and slab benches without backs for seats. The prospect was gloomy and even forbidding. From ten to fifteen persons of the steadier classes assembled as worshippers. Amongst them was a good brother by the name of Thomas G. Thompson, a man of some prominence in a religious point of view and a Classleader in the Methodist Church. He kindly consented to lead the singing. So I read one of those grand old long meter hymns from the Village Hymn Book, then extensively used in more enlightened communities. I think it was the hymn beginning "Before Jehovah's awful throne, Ye nations bow with sacred joy, etc". But to my great horror, brother Thompson deliberately started

a common meter tune. So in lining the long hymn, two lines at a time, (there was but one book) at the end of every other line there lacked two notes for the number of syllables, and brother Thompson each time supplied them with a different twiddle de. So by the time we had reached the end of the hymn, the singing had become supremely ludicrous.

I surmise that if some of our scoffers at instrumental music in church service had experienced what I have in frontier singing, they would have hailed as I did the introduction of the organ as an aid in the worship of God.

Arrangements were now made for me to preach every alternate Sunday in the town of Jeffersonville, one Sunday in Thompson's Valley and the other Sunday in the month at such places as occasion might open to me. But with all I could see, there was little encouragement for me to remain in that field. The congregations were small and continued so, and for want of encouragement, my preaching continued unattractive and feeble. However the time for the Fall Meeting of Presbytery was now drawing nigh and I determined to remain up to that time. Presbytery came and as no better field had opened to me, I was encouraged to return and await further events. I did so, but with the inward feeling that it would only be to winter and after the spring meeting of Presbytery seek some other field of labor.

When spring came, things had changed and I had formed pleasant attachments for many of the people and had gained many warm friends. So I remained still longer.

After my return from Presbytery, it was arranged for me to change my place of residence from the Court House to Liberty Hill eight miles west of that place. This introduced me into the family of Major Thomas J. Higginbotham and in all my long experience, I have never found a more delightful place of abode. Neither Major Higginbotham nor his wife, Nancy, was a member of the church nor a professor of religion but they spared no pains to make my stay with them agreeable. And if I can point to any one period in my sojourn here as a green spot, it is the time remained in that excellent family. The Major was a thorough business man of large experience and excellent judgment, quiet and unobtrusive and yet prompt and progressive in all his transactions. Mrs. Higginbotham was a woman of excellent spirit, patient and forbearing and of the very first household qualifications. They subsequently both united with the Presbyterian Church. He has entered upon his reward, she at last accounts, still lingers behind waiting until her change comes. I remained with them more than two years.

But there were other families still lower down of no less excellence that I must not fail to mention who received me not merely as a welcome guest but even as a son. The first I shall mention is that of Alexander Ward and excellent wife, Vicy. They were already at that early age advanced in life but still active and efficient. Mr. Ward might well have been styled one "Of Nature's noblemen" and his wife one of the excellent of the earth. Their house was open to all who chose to avail themselves of its hospitality, and I presume no one ever entered who was worthy that did not feel he had found an agreeable home. At an earlier period of their lives

Mr. and Mrs. Ward had been members of the Presbyterian Church, but in the lapse of time the church to which they had belonged had been neglected and finally disbanded, and they were left in that anomalous condition without any connection with the visible church. But they never lost their integrity and as soon as another church was organized they were amongst the very first to take their place in it. They lived a number of years to enjoy the privileges of their new connection. They have long since entered the Church Triumphant.

In the same region, called the Cove, were three other families of equal prominence in a worldly point of view, though somewhat less noted for their religious character. These were Squire Wm. Barns, Capt. John Barns and the two Bowans, Gen. Rees T. and Col. Henry Bowen. These were all men of wealth and of unbounded hospitality, kind and cordial to me and their friends in general, but on the part of the gentlemen but little inclined to religion with one exception, that of Col. Henry Bowen who was a member of the Methodist Church. John and Wm. Barns, are now the most prominent members of the Presbyterian Church in that immediate vicinity.

There were other excellent families in that neighborhood such as the Gillespies, the Youngs and others, but they belonged to the Methodist Church and for the most part have passed away.

As I have above stated, when spring came things had changed and I remained.

At the Court House my congregation had continued small and discouraging up to the last Sabbath in November of my first year. On the second Sabbath of that month I filled my appointment at the C. H. Having occasion on Monday morning to go to the Clerk's Office, I was introduced for the first time to a rather noted character with whom in after days I had more or less intercourse during the most of my stay in the county. It was the rev. George Brown, then the acting Clerk of the courts, a man of extensive prominence both in the business and religious community not only of that but also of other adjoining counties. He was of more than ordinary intelligence, as unusually expert business and a man of remarkable fluency as a speaker, whether in politics or religion. He was a Northern man by birth and education and had gained the general confidence of the people.

After transacting my business and spending a little time in conversation he said to me with a good deal of affability; "You preached in town yesterday, I understand". To this I assented, He then proceeded, "Had I known it in time, I might have been with you. I was only a little way out in the country". I replied, "I have another appointment for the fourth Sabbath and shall be pleased to see you at any time". He then said, "I shall remember it and try to be with you." On Saturday evening before the appointment, I went up to town and tarried all night on Main Street near the church. Next morning at rather an early hour,

I saw from my window Mr. Brown passing on towards the church and seemed as if the whole village was following in his wake. Hastening on to the church full of people, a sight I had never witnessed there before.

I spoke to Mr. Brown and asked him up into the pulpit. He at once complied and being seated I asked him to preach for me. But he declined by saying, "No, you had better fill your own appointment. If I can be of any benefit to you after you get through, I shall be pleased to do so."

I then asked him to close the service in any way he might think proper. After the sermon, he gave quite an animated exhortation and then closed with prayer. When we came down the people flocked round us and seemed greatly delighted to have seen a Methodist and a Presbyterian minister in the pulpit together without a collision. About the same time a new Methodist minister came on the circuit and the congregation continued to grow in numbers and interest.

Mr. Brown was seemingly a true friend to me while he remained in the county.

During that first winter and the following spring, three young men, members of the Presbyterian Church came to the county from other sections who subsequently became pillars in the church. Washington Spotts, a merchant from Louisburg, Rufus Brittain a civil engineer, from New Jersey, and Wm. L. Watkins, a farmer, from Pittsylvania County Va. These young men settled permanently in the county and excited a wide influence in

the establishment of Presbyterianism. Spotts and Brittain were located at the county seat and by the excellency of their lives were a living illustration of the claims of Presbyterianism and the power of the religion of Christ. Like Daniel at the court of Babylon, they served their God in the midst of surrounding wickedness. Mr. Watkins was located at a considerable distance from town and in consequence unable to afford us the same amount of aid to our feeble efforts at this central point.

In the early part of the following summer, that is of 1852, we had our first accession to the church from the world. This was a young married woman of the first standing in the community and connected with the best families. She was the daughter of a Mr. Harrison who had married a Gillespie, and the wife of Samuel L. Graham, the brother of Mrs. Amanda Cox of previous mention. Thus by degrees more and more interest clustered about us until in the fall of that year, it was thought we had gained strength enough in the kind providence of God, to attempt the organization of a church. Gathering up all of our forces, we went up to Presbytery with a respectable petition and obtained the appointment of a committee to effect an organization.

The time set arrived and the church was organized with Messrs. Spotts and Brittain as ruling Elders. These were young, modest and unobtrusive men, but I have never in all my experience known more conscientious, faithful, trustworthy and efficient Elders than they became and continued to be throughout their lives.

The next step was to secure a house of worship. And although a few in number, the work was hailed with pleasure and prosecuted with avidity. It was not long therefore until we had completed a beautiful and commodious church to which we could and did resort with thankful hearts for the wonderful goodness and mercy of God in crowning our feeble efforts with so much success. We had now obtained a footing which in subsequent years has proved to be the nucleus of wonderful success in the establishment of the Redeemer's Cause for that region, then so remote, as it appeared from almost every salutary influence.

In the meantime our efforts were extended in other directions of which Thompson's Valley and the Cove were the principal centers. Burk's Garden, Bluestone, Baptist Valley and the Mouth of Indian were visited at irregular intervals. On Bluestone, we organized a small church called Bethel, near the present site of Bluefield and Graham. But being surrounded by other denominations and the original members removing to other sections, it continued but a few years until it was dropped from the roll.

In Thompson's Valley and the Cove regular monthly services were maintained and now at this present writing June 11, 1891, there an elegant church edifices and flourishing organizations.

In Thompson's Valley, for more than seven years, I preached in two neighborhoods. In one I was dependent for a place to hold services

on the good people who would open to us the doors of their houses. In this at least we resembled the Apostles; we went from house to house. But for the greater part of that time, I preached at the house of a Mr. Rogers, whose wife had been a member of the Presbyterian church, but under some strong delusion had joined the Mormons. It was a long time before we saw any visible fruits of our labors in that community. At length however one Sunday, I thought I could discern some tenderness amongst the people. So at the close of the service, I ventured to say, if there was any one in the audience who had made up his mind to live a Christian life, and wished to unite with our branch of the church he would please come forward and give me his hand. To my surprise and great delight, Mrs. Polly Thompson wife of Col. Archie Thompson, the very first woman of the whole community and three young women came forward and gave me their hands.

Mrs. Thompson, familiarly known as Aunt Polly Thompson, proved to be a Mother in Israel indeed. She was in every sense one of the kindest and most benevolent of women. Known throughout the Valley and universally esteemed and beloved. She was the first fruits of a large ingathering of the foremost people into the Presbyterian church. At the last sessional report to Presbytery, the communicants numbered over one hundred and were possessed of two well-constructed, comfortable church edifices. Aunt Polly lived to see her excellent husband, and many of her descendants, friends and neighbors brought into the church. So now

there are four organized churches, Jeffersonville, Thompson's Valley, Burk's Garden, and Graham, with a membership of some three hundred or more, when 41 years ago, I found only three women who were openly identified with the Presbyterian Church. The greater part of this ingathering however has occurred subsequent to my leaving that interesting field.

But with me time passed on. My ministry commenced at what would now be regarded an advanced age. I was licensed at 32, had preached for over three years, had been ordained to the full work of the ministry and under the blessing of a kind and beneficent Father, had been instrumental in the organization of two small churches and the erection of one neat and substantial church edifice. During all this time, I had suffered many hardships and privations, and had endured many harassing trials. So according to the course of human events and human usages, I began to cast about for a helpmeet to bear with me my burdens and share with me my joys and sorrows. In the kind providence of God, I was directed to one who proved willing to share her lot with mine and for more than 37 years has borne vastly more than an equal share of the trials and bereavements to which we have been subjected.

On December the 14th 1853, I was united in marriage to Miss Cynthia Mary Wisor, the daughter of Capt. Henry Wisor then a prominent citizen of Pulaski Co. near the present site of Dublin. His wife, the mother of Cynthia Mary, was a member of New Dublin Church and universally esteemed

for her piety and benevolence. The mantle of her mother fell upon the daughter and she well sustained through a long and eventful life this maternal bequest.

This as is often the case, was an important era in my life. I had now something to live for apart from mere personal indulgence. I became in a higher sense a man and a citizen. I was looked upon in a new light by my fellow citizens and my influence was proportionally enlarged.

Thus things moved on, not without trials and discouragements it is true, but with some degree of success in my work. Another year rolled on and on the 10th of November 1854 we realized that joyful event, not uncommon in the experience of newly married people, the birth of our first born child. To say she was beautiful in our eyes expresses but little of what we felt to be true. Her form and features seemed faultless, and her eyes bright and blue as the cloudless sky above us. Our joy and gratitude were complete. And what has proved a source of unceasing joy to us, after a lapse of 36 years, her beauty whether in feature or amiability, and indeed in all that constitutes the Christian wife and mother has never waned. We consecrated her to God as our first offering and called her Fanny. She became the mother of seven children and is the wife of rev. Charles W. Johnson, now of Fayetteville, Tenn.

Friends were now multiplied both amongst the Methodists and amongst those who made no pretensions to religion. We were received everywhere and by all classes with the greatest show of kindness of hospitality. I

can say of the Tazewell people, that however short they may have fallen in personal piety, they were ever ready to minister their cup of cold water to the prophet that might come amongst them. A more hospitable people I have never known than were the people of Tazewell at that period.

Thus things went on with but little interruption. Occasionally one or two persons would come forward and unite with the church and our number slowly increased. But the odds against often seemed discouraging and even overwhelming. There we stood a youthful minister and two youthful elders, and the few adherents who had united their destinies with ours. While on the other hand stood the great mass of indifference and worldiness. Prominent on this side stood some four or five citizens of more than ordinary intelligence and of wide influence, who though outwardly respectors of religion and even sympathizers with us in our enterprize, and yet showed no signs of identifying themselves with us, so that the weight of their influence seemed rather against us.

About this time we had an accession to our church which greatly encouraged us. A lawyer of apparently the very best attainments in his profession, a cultivated gentleman of greater age and experience, came with a letter of dismission for himself and his family and settled in our town. He united at once with our church and espoused our cause with an earnestness and efficiency that greatly revived us. He was from a neighboring State and from a church where he had the very best

advantages. He was therefore able to take and did take a very active part in all our church matters.

He was well versed in the scriptures and in the doctrines of our church, and being very fluent in speech he was always ready to lend a helping hand in any service or benevolent enterprize of the church. So likewise his household was ordered in the most Scriptural and evangelical manner. We were greatly elated and perhaps exalted above measure. We soon installed him (he was an elder before) a ruler in the church. Thus things went cheerfully for a time. But a dark and dreary hour followed our elation. He returned to his former home on business. Over staying his time, we began to make inquiries about him, and to our amazement and chagrin, we learned that he was lying at a low place by the way in a state inebriation. And now no tongue can express the sorrow that filled our hearts. We felt as if all were lost. He returned sick. I called on him and immediately he began to talk about the interests of the church as though nothing had occurred to cast a gloom over her fair escutcheon. As soon as he began to go out, I brought my elders to my study and invited him to meet them. He came promptly. We told him what we had heard. He frankly confessed it all and greatly deplored his weakness. Then we all melted and in tears and agony and prayed over our calamity.

He implored our forgiveness and with the most solemn protestations declared that another drop of liquor should never pass his lips. He then proposed that he would go before the church, confess his fault and enter

anew upon his duties. This he faithfully performed. And for a while we were reassured. While he was at home and with his family his deportment was everything that could be desired in a hightoned Christian gentleman. But alas! whenever he went from home, he fell victim to the demon of his appetite. He thus soon proved a failure, both in the church and in his profession and so returned to the place whence he had come. We dismissed him to his church as he had been dismissed to us.

I have followed his history. Wherever he has gone, when with his family, he was everything that heart could wish, when separated from them, he had no control over his besetment. Such is the power of habit and the influence of a godly woman.

Two years had now passed in the steady march of time. On the 11th day of November 1856, we had a son born to us and called his name Henry. He was a fine healthy looking fellow and promised well in his infancy and childhood. He grew up as boys generally do and graduated with some distinction at Hampden Sidney in the class of 1866 and 1867. Before his 20th year, he became Professor of Latin and Greek in King College and for 13 years sustained himself well in his profession. He is now married to Miss Kate Montague and engaged in secular business in Bristol. Thus we have had much comfort in our two eldest children.

But a period of despondency and temptation now followed. The work of the church did not progress as rapidly as I thought it ought. The four or five gentlemen above alluded to remained unmoved. Meeting

after meeting was held and yet those men in whom I felt so deep an interest showed no signs of softening. I concluded that it was because my preaching was not of sufficient force to convince and convert them, and that I might thus stand in the way of their salvation. Indeed I felt convinced that if the right kind of man could be had to minister to them they would surely believe.

While in this state of mind, the proposition came to me to take a school in Pulaski Co. and preach to colored people and aid Rev. George Painter in his pastoral labors of New Dublin Draper's Valley and Anchor of Hope. But I could not get my own consent to leave my own field until I had secured a man to take my place. I found a man in the person of my classmate and friend, rev. Jonathan Lyons, then preaching in Fayetteville, Tenn. I regarded him as a much more efficient preacher than myself and flattered myself that he would be fully competent to accomplish what I had failed to do. So I engaged him to come and I with my little family took my departure to my new field. This change took place in October 1857.

But it is not improper to remark that only two of the gentlemen in whom I felt such a deep interest ever entered the church so as to become efficient members. They were made ruling elders and labored faithfully in the Master's cause. Another one in extreme old age was induced to enter the church as a nominal member. With one exception, the rest have passed away as they had lived, and he stands today as he did 35 years ago.

This I set down as the great mistake of my life. Instead of leaving that great field, I should have roused myself to its demands and held my ground. This I think is verified in the experience of the whole of my

life. It is true that I may be unable to estimate the value of my own labors, but to me it seems as if I could have accomplished more in the field I left than in the one I entered and in which I have continued to the present time.

Here I came in contact with a different class of people. In the main they may have had more intelligence and refinement, but in generosity, my former people are not surpassed. Here I found more of Presbyterianism and of ministerial support sympathy, but not more encouragement in my work.

In my teaching I was successful even beyond expectations and in my labors among the colored people I had encouragement enough. But in preaching in the old established churches, I felt vastly more cramped than I had done in my former charge.

For a time I preached in Newbern where there was then no organized church. But apart from comforting some of the old saints, I saw no positive fruits of my labors.

I then accepted a call to become co-paster with father Painter in Draper's Valley but still continued my labors amongst the colored people, (then slaves). They seemed greatly to enjoy the attention and instructions and I continued my labors amongst them through the war and even after their emancipation until they had obtained ministers of their own color. My interest in this work never subsided until it was taken out of my hands.

It now came about in the providences of God that the health of my friend and patron, the rev. George Painter, began to fail more and more

and the help in his large and important field became more and more needful. So at his instance I was called to the pastorate of New Dublin Church. But this community being composed of wealthy and to some extent rival families, there was a want of unanimity in my call. Those who laid the greatest claim to aristocracy expressed themselves opposed to my becoming their pastor. While the other classes, who were largely in the majority, urged my acceptance to the extent that if I should decline it would produce a rupture in the church. In view of these facts and the fact that nearly all who were members of the church were my friends, I finally consented to be installed. So I entered upon this new field with the burden of opposition upon my shoulders which I was never able to throw off. With my shrinking sensitive nature or temperament, I could not bring myself to assume the roll of a pastor towards those who were in the opposition and so there was no bridging over of the chasm. True they attended the services of the church but they did it in a manner to make me feel that they regarded me as a usurper. No human tongue can express what trials I endured in this anomalous position. Finally however after a pastorate of five years, the consent of my friends was obtained to my resignation and as soon as the way could be made clear, I rolled this burden from my shoulders.

In the meantime father Painter had entered upon his final rest and I was left sole pastor of Draper's Valley Church. Here the case was very different. I had the esteem and confidence of nearly every member of the church and of, I may say, the entire community. Many precious seasons of refreshment were experienced and many were gathered into church who are

still prominent in the work of the church. Many attachments were here formed lasting as life and a more delightful community nowhere exists whether in South West Va. or indeed in any other part of Virginia so far as my knowledge extends.

My pastorate over this people, though beset with many hardships, forms the greenest spot on the tablet of my memory. While there are many things to regret in my own weakness and inefficiency, yet I trust I may look back upon it as labor not spent in vain.

For sixteen years, I rode mainly on horseback, every two weeks, through winter's storms and summer's heat, 17 miles back and forth making the aggregate besides the extra occasions of attending marriages and funerals, of 14144 miles. Besides this, for the greater part of this time, I was engaged in teaching and thus compelled to go up on Saturday and return on Sunday after preaching so as to meet my school on Monday morning. And yet I think, I may safely say, that this was the most agreeable and comforting labor of my life.

During this period however, a dark pall spread over our land, the darkness of which after the lapse of well nigh one third of a century, has not yet wholly subsided. This allusion is to the Civil War, denominated by our adversaries as the rebellion of 1861 to -65. Those who did not live through that period can form but little conception of the sufferings which were undergone by men, women, and children, during that eventful period. It was not merely the sufferings endured by the soldiers in the field, but the anxieties, cares, fears, suspense and

apprehensions of parents, children, wives, sisters and lovers for their dear absent ones. It would hardly be in place for me, in a narrative like this, to dwell more at large on the national events of that dark period. These are and will be fully delineated in Archives of the times. But it may not be improper for me to note some of the great changes which have resulted under my own observation.

In sentiment, I was opposed to Secession from the beginning, because, I thought, I foresaw that it would prove to be a disastrous struggle to the Southern States. In this I differed with most of my brethren in the ministry and consequently deferred to their better judgment. Hence I remained a quiet supporter of the "lost cause" to the last, though I was unable to divest myself of the feeling that we must in the end be overpowered by the greater numbers and the better facilities of our adversaries. Our people failed to seek emancipation from the Northern yoke from right motives. Instead of seeking deliverance in order that they might become a more godfearing and godhonoring nation, most of the leaders sought it in order that they might consume it upon their own lusts. Hence success would only have proven more disastrous than defeat itself has done. And this indeed has proved to be dire enough.

After more than a quarter of a century, we hear a great deal said about the "New South", about the growing prosperity and the unparalleled developments of the present day. And in these respects there are great and marvelous changes going on. But alas! alas! it is to be deplored that many of them are achieved at the expense of public morals and

public trust.

By the intermingling of a heterogeneous mass of men and nationalities, that lofty tone of public sentiment, for which our people were justly noted, has been trampled in the dust. Society vitiated and religion has become less effective with the people at large. Our offices of Public trust are filled with men of a low grade, men who are too ignorant to perform the duties required, or if not so, too corrupt to be trusted.

The rising generation of the colored people, instead of improving the privileges secured to them by their emancipation, are growing up, in idleness indolence, improvidence and vice. In short the whole fabric of society has been changed from what it was before the war, and that not for the better but in most things for the worse. But God will doubtless overrule all these things for a greater good, though it may be after He has led the nation through still greater trials.

At the date of this writing February 1892, our land is the scene of numberless public and private murders too horrible for description. Human blood is daily crying to God for vengeance and it is not reasonable to suppose that He will prosper a land polluted with blood, until it shall have been purged by divine retribution.

It was during this dark period, the period of the Civil War, that we experienced our first great family affliction. God had blessed us with four vigorous healthy children, two daughters and two sons. To our fond and doting vision, it scarcely occurred to us that anything could impede their growth and development. Or if it did occur to us, we were prone to

to repel the thought, and flatter ourselves that we should be exempt from the many ills incident to growing households.

But the joy and tranquility of our household was soon to be broken up. The blow fell upon our second daughter, Mary Eunice. In symmetry of form, she seemed a thing molded for eternity. In beauty and loveliness of expression her face was faultless. In clearness of perception and discriminating thought her mind seemed too mature for childhood. Although she had reached but little beyond her fourth anniversary, her thoughts seemed to dwell more on the future than on the present. When about her play and in her childish amusements, her sweet childish voice was almost constantly heard singing and humming snatches of her favorite hymn: "I want to be an angel and with angels stand".

But suddenly and without any premonitory symptom, she was attacked by that relentless foe to childish innocence and youthful beauty, Scarlet Fever; And after four days of unutterable bodily suffering, her young spirit was wafted to the bosom of her Saviour, and she had realized infinitely more than she had anticipated in the expression of the little song of her choice.

Only those who have experienced like afflictions can have any conception of the sorrow that filled our hearts. We could do no more than bow with humble resignation to the will of our heavenly Father, and in bitterness of soul, exclaim "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord".

We had little more than laid the remains of our departed one in their

last resting place, when our youngest born, a fine, intelligent, winsome boy, of eighteen months, was attacked by the same fell destroyer, that had so ruthlessly carried off his charming sister. In his case the attack was less violent, but equally persistent. For some forty days, the disease preyed upon his system, until nature could sustain no more. Then like the flickering of a candle in it's socket, our darling boy fell gently into that sleep which knows no earthly awakening.

The patient sufferings which were borne by our George Jacob, for so long a period are vividly impressed on our minds, but are beyond my ability to describe. The bereavement seemed almost insupportable, but we could not suppress the feeling that since they were gone, it was better that they should be safely delivered from the ills of this world and forever safe in the bosom of Him who has said; "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not". So we endeavored to say with the Psalmist: "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it".

What a terrible thing sin is, since it must be followed by such awful consequences!

But we were not wholly bereft. We still had spared to us our first born daughter and son. But they too were attacked by the same malady. And for a time it seemed as if we should be deprived of our only earthly joy and hope. But God in his longsuffering kindness rebuked the disease and saved us from this additional sorrow. And not only this, but in merciful loving kindness, He subsequently gave us back another daughter

and son as if to fill up the vacuum occasioned by our former bereavement.

But to return to ministerial work. After the dissolution of the New Dublin pastorate, I still continued to preach one half my time in Draper's Valley.

It was not long after this until a call was extended to me by the Bell Spring Church which was accepted. This call was for one half of my time which again occupied me for all the Sabbaths of the month.

In the meantime Dublin became a place of considerable business. Giles, Mercer and parts of Tazewell and Bland Counties, made it their business center on the railroad. Also the whole of the Southern part of Pulaski found it to be the most convenient point for the shipment of its produce. In consequence of these facts Dublin for a number of years displayed a good deal of activity in a business point of view. Owing to this and a little alienation on the part of some members of the New Dublin Church it was deemed expedient to organize a new church at Dublin Depot. This resulted also in the erection of a large substantial church edifice at that place.

While these things were in progress, a scheme inaugurated in Draper's Valley to establish a jointstock, classical school and to employ a minister who should superintend the school and also serve as the Pastor of the church. I was strongly solicited to accept the position.

But after due consideration, I deemed it inexpedient to relinquish my home and the relation I held to the church in this community for a position which, to say the least, was involved in some degree of

uncertainty as to its results. Hence in order to aid the church and the community all I could, I opened correspondence with the late rev. George H. Gilmer of Halifax C. H. who finally accepted the position and held it up to the time of his providential disability.

As soon as matters had been satisfactorily arranged with Draper's Valley, a call was extended to me by the new church at Dublin Depot, which was accepted and in some measure lightened my labors.

These two pastorates for a time were greatly prospered under the blessing of God. Many were added to the churches of such as we trust will be saved. The church at Bell Spring was more than doubled and that at Dublin perhaps more than quadrupled. But as time rolled on, changes must occur in respect to churches, as well as in respect to individuals. In Bell Spring, mutterings began to be circulated that the pastor was delinquent in pastoral visitation which in a strict sense was too true, owing in part to the fact that the pastor formerly for the whole of his pastoral life had been confined for five days in the week to the school room and could not well form habits of pastoral visitation. But mutterings and complaints of this were not, owing to his shrinking disposition, calculated to improve his pastoral habits. Hence matters grew rather worse until it became necessary to dissolve the pastoral relation.

At Dublin other matters conspired to retard the progress which had once been so encouraging. The construction of other railroads, created other centers of business which turned the tide away from Dublin. This

necessitated the removal of business men to other points of greater activity. Besides this efflux a number of the most prominent members of the church were called away by death. Hence the population of the place was greatly reduced and the new comers who came in were not of the class of people who usually find their home in the Presbyterian Church. In consequence of these facts, the church has not only been greatly weakened in numbers, but has also been lacking in material to draw from. So that for some time past there has been but little growth or prosperity in church. And yet it is pleasant to say that, notwithstanding the decrease in numbers and efficiency, the members though few in number, have adhered harmoniously together, and proven themselves faithful in the performance of all the functions of a church.

It becomes necessary now, in order to keep up the family history, to go back for a time in the narrative of events.

Our eldest children, Fanny and Henry W., had grown up and completed their education, both having united with the church at an early age.

Fanny was united in marriage with the Rev. Charles W. Johnson, and is at this writing living with her six children in Fayetteville, Tenn. where her husband is pastor of the church.

Harry, as he has been familiarly called, was at the age of 20 elected to the chair of Latin and Greek in King College, Bristol, Tenn. which position he held for twelve years, but on account of the failure of his eyes, was compelled to turn his attention to pursuits of a more secular

character. He was united in marriage with Miss Kate Montague of Bristol where they still reside.

But as before intimated there were still two other children, Edith Elizabeth and Frederick Joseph. Edith, the elder of these, was some eight years younger than Harry. Edith still remains with us and is the comfort and solace of our declining years. She also united with the church at an early age and has been and is now making herself useful by teaching.

Freddie, our youngest, at a very early age, showed traits of serious meditation. At the age of three or four years, when engaged in play with other children, near his own age, would often gather them about him, mount a chair or a box and with commendable seriousness go through with all the forms of a regular service. While almost an infant, at family prayers, while the rest of the family read the Scriptures alternately verse about, as was the settled habit, he would have his Testament in hand and with the utmost quietude and reverence remain seated through the whole reading and then solemnly kneel with the rest of the family. As he grew in years, his mind developed in aptitude of acquiring learning, his disposition in an unusual degree of self-denial and sincerity. At the age of thirteen, he gave his heart to the Saviour and united with the church. At the age of seventeen he entered the freshman class in King College under his brother. About this time he first made known the fact that he felt it his duty, if the way was clear, to prepare himself for the work of the ministry of the gospel. For three whole years he applied himself with

the greatest assiduity and devotion to the study of the Classics and other literature embraced in a regular Collegiate course. His vacations were spent in various laborious pursuits that he might gather a little means by which he might be enabled to pursue his studies the ensuing year in College.

At the completion of his third Collegiate year, his health had become such enfeebled by confinement to his studies and an attack of measles. But firm in his purpose and unyielding in his devotion to the cause which he had espoused, he set out again in the heat of summer, with unmitigated zeal in the effort to gain sufficient means to carry him through his senior year.

But alas! here follows the darkest period of our family history. Returning from his work for a few days rest and recreation in the home of his childhood, before entering upon the senior year of his college course, just three days before the time set for his leaving home he was attacked with a fever against which he struggled for three weeks but in vain. Without a murmur or complaint, he abandoned himself to the will of the Master and with unfaltering patience awaited the result.

But the ravages of the fell disease became too great for his somewhat feeble frame. On the morning of the 26th day of Sept. 1887 he fell asleep in Jesus. The Master had need for him and called him up higher. Hence it was not for us to murmur or repine but the providence seemed dark to us and the burden sustained by us too heavy to be borne by us save in the precious faith of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. "Precious in the

eyes of the Lord is the death of his saints". But oh! how hard for us to realize when the burden falls upon ourselves!

Here however the veil must be drawn over the past, for even now at this somewhat remote period, the memory of the sad event is too painful to admit of a further attempt at recital. In humble admission of the divine goodness, we can only say, "Thy will be done".

From that painful event to the present writing June the 22nd 1893, my life has been seemingly an uneventful one. Without worldly aspiration or worldly hope, my days seem merely to have been drawn out simply that I might grow older. With but little benefit to others or real comfort to myself, I have been pressed forward by constantly recurring circumstances so as to appear to others as an active man for my age while indeed it has often been a matter of almost indifference to how or in what way my energies were expended. So that "Like the Eagle hastening to her prey" my time has passed swiftly away and I am now an old man "who has outlived the men of his generation"; The sympathies of the age are but little with me nor are my sympathies with the present age in many of its untried innovations.

Of one thing however, I become daily more fully convinced that the Psalmist was right when he says:

The days of our years are three score years and ten;
And if by reason of strength they be four score years;
Yet is their strength, labor and sorrow,
For they are soon cut off, and we fly away.

But I can also with equal propriety say with him: "Surely goodness

and mercy have followed me all the days of my life".

I can truly say that unmerited blessings have attended me every day of my past life. Never have I been a very great sufferer from any bodily affliction. While it may be said that for a great number of years, I have never been entirely free from some slight physical derangement, yet still it is wonderful how my strength and bodily functions have been preserved through so many years and through so much toil, anxieties and cares which by men of the present day would be called hardships.

Through a married life of well nigh 40 years, during which time it has been our uniform custom to maintain family worship night and morning, there has not occurred a single instance in which my health was so bad as to prevent me from dressing myself and either conducting or attending the prayers of the household.

And now I embrace this privilege of placing on record my heartfelt thanks to Almighty God for his almost unparalleled goodness to me and my dear ones.

I still retain the nominal pastorate of Dublin Church, preaching to them as best I can once in two weeks. But the church is now very small and my efforts in preaching very feeble. Indeed I scarcely think of trying to do any aggressive work. The congregations are comparatively good and always attentive. But in a great measure, they are made up of the members of our own and other churches. Hence my labors are and have been mainly for strengthening and comforting the people of God, feeling impressed with the

hope that the consistent lives of Christians will be more effective for good to those who are without than any preaching that I could possibly do.

Besides I find it so much more congenial with my present tastes and feelings to dwell on the love, mercy and promises of God in his wonderful care for his people.

In my younger days, I felt constrained to warn sinners against the awful consequences of a state of rebellion against their Maker. But somehow as I grow older I am more impressed with the fact that men generally well aware of their danger as sinners, and want rather to be won over by the goodness and love of God, than to be driven by his wrath. It is the goodness of God that leadeth men to repentance.

But I am daily admonished by the perceptible failure of strength that the time is not remote when it will become necessary to yield the prosecution of this great work to other, and I trust more faithful, if not more able hands.

Since June the 22, 1823, to the present writing, March 1, 1894, there has been no record of passing events.

For a time, everything moved forward in its wonted course. Our eldest daughter, with her husband, Rev. C. W. Johnson and five of their children, was with us as a resort from the oppressive heat in Middle Tennessee. With the sport and prattle of the dear children and the social intercourse with the parents, things went merrily on as "a marriage bell" to the time when duty called away both parents and

children to their distant home.

Then from August onward, we began to feel apprehensive that the health of my dear wife and the fond mother of our children had received too great a strain from her ever care for the comfort of those around her. Naturally of a very delicate frame, she habitually underwent more than she was able to endure with justice to herself.

Yet still her symptoms were more insidious than alarming. Consequently we flattered ourselves that a little rest and quiet would restore her to her normal condition again. But in this we were doomed to a sorrowful disappointment. Almost daily her symptoms, though apparently unimportant, became more marked and more troublesome to her.

At length medical aid was called in. But the verdict of the Physician was invariably the same; "There was no organic disease, though there was some slight derangement of the functions, possibly of the heart, which need cause no alarm, but would soon disappear".

Other physicians were called in. They agreed upon a course of treatment which for several weeks was faithfully and even rigidly carried out, but all in vain. The utmost medical skill exhausted itself without avail. Her paroxysms of suffering became more and more frequent and more and more intense until her feeble frame could endure no more. On the 13th day of Feb. 1894 at five minutes after 8 o'clock P. M. she quietly and peacefully breathed out her unfettered spirit into the bosom of Him who has so graciously said; "If I go away, I will come again and

receive you unto Myself that where I am there ye may be also".

Oh! It was indeed a most sorrowful relief to realize that her cruel physical sufferings were ended, and to witness the calm, placid, sweet repose into which she had gently fallen. Like the child exhausted by a long days ramble and fatigue falls quietly asleep on the fond bosom of its mother, she gently closed her eyes and fell peacefully "Asleep in Jesus".

In scenes like this how vividly are we impressed with the meaning of the Scripture which says: "He giveth his beloved Sleep"! It was not death! It seemed rather, the sweet restful repose of the weary traveler when his journey is ended. It was the end of a noble, faithful Christian life.

Life's duty done, as sinks the clay,
Light from its load the spirit flies;
While heaven and earth combine to say,
How blest the righteous when she dies!

Our dear departed one was naturally of a delicate and somewhat fragile physical frame. Reared in the lap of at least comparative luxury and ease with servants to obey her every behest, she had experienced but little of the actual drudgeries of life when called to leave her paternal home. And indeed it was not until she had become the mother of four children that the galling drudgery of entire self-reliance came upon her.

In the eventful year of our Lord 1865 when the cohorts of the Confederacy laid down their arms, and the edict of the Chief Executive

of the United States, proclaiming the universal and unconditional freedom of the slave, swept over the land like a blighting simoon, consternation fell upon many a happy household.

It was then that her faithful servants were torn ruthlessly from their homes and from her guardian care. She was left for the first time alone with all the burden and care of a family of helpless children resting upon her feeble shoulders. But she accepted the condition of things without a murmur or complaint. Feeble and inexperienced as she was she never blanched before the inrolling tide of worldly cares and household burdens. As far as her strength would permit and often far beyond her strength, with untiring devotion to her husband and children, she strove earnestly to discharge every duty of both wife and mother.

Her uniform habit for many years was to see to everything about the house at whatever cost to herself. Even when her domestic help seemed abundant to others, she found something to do, from early morn to late at night. Personal ease or comfort seemed to hold no count with her. It was the comfort and convenience of others she sought. And until that was accomplished "she gave neither sleep to her eyes nor slumber to her eyelids".

But with all her care and toil for the good of others she trained her children to observe the strictest rules of truth, uprightness and religious observances. This she did by both precept and example. So conscientious was she in her habits of truth and rectitude, that her influence was felt by all about her.

1895. February 13. This day marks the first anniversary of that dear one who was for so many years the light and joy of her household. One whole year, we trust, she has been with her dear children who had gone before her. One whole year she realized what it is to be in the immediate presence of that blessed Saviour when she adored during her sojourn here on earth. One whole year, she has enjoyed the unveiled grandeur and glory which even Paul but dimly saw, when he exclaims, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of men the things which God hath prepared for them that love him".

While we fail to apprehend what must be the beauty, the bliss, the quiet, the rest, the glory, of the place which God himself has provided for his loving children, we cannot wholly divest ourselves of the secret feeling, that from the midst of all this grandeur and glory she does not concern herself about the welfare, the comfort and the affairs of those of us, whom she has left behind.

But we are too well assured,

"There be no sorrows there," for

"The righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father".

The garlands of immortal joy
Shall bloom on every head;
While sorrow, sighing and distress,
Like shadows, all are fled.

And it is written; "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, said the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors;

for their works do follow them".

But alas for me! Bereft, afflicted, alone. It has been a year of great sorrow and sore affliction. And yet, I can say, that the Lord has not left me without many tokens of his loving kindness and tender mercy. Left as I have been in sadness and loneliness, without any worldly aspirations for the future, still my daily wants have been supplied from his beauty and loved ones have kindly ministered to my necessities. Hence in humble submission, I would say: "Even so Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. And with Job: "All the days of my appointed time, will I wait until my change come."

What more of earth remains to me will be chronicled by other pens, and other lips will, doubtless, give expression to the esteem in which my life and character are held. But it is of little consequence to me now, what estimate men may place on my worth, so that I may be permitted to stand at last, cleansed and purified by God's grace, on the right hand of Him, who is the redeemer and sanctifier of his Saints.

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Isaac Naff.

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